CASTES AND TRIBES of SOUTHERN INDIA



E. THURSTON

CASTES AND TRIBES

OF

SOUTHERN INDIA

CASTES AND TRIBES

OF

SOUTHERN INDIA

BY

EDGAR THURSTON, C.I.E.,
Superintendent, Madras Government Museum; Correspondant Étranger,
Société d'Anthropologie de Paris; Socio Corrispondante,
Societa Romana di Anthropologia.

ASSISTED BY

K. RANGACHARI, M.A.,
of the Madras Government Museum.

VOLUME III—K

GOVERNMENT PRESS, MADRAS

1909.

CASTES AND TRIBES OF SOUTHERN INDIA.

VOLUME III.

KABBĒRA.—The Kabbēras are a caste of Canarese fishermen and cultivators. "They are," Mr. W. Francis writes,* "grouped into two divisions, the Gaurimakkalu or sons of Gauri (Parvati) and the Gangimakkalu or sons of Ganga, the goddess of water, and they do not intermarry, but will dine together. Each has its bedagus (exogamous septs), and these seem to be different in the two sub-divisions. The Gaurimakkalu are scarce in Bellary, and belong chiefly to Mysore. They seem to be higher in the social scale (as such things are measured among Hindus) than the Gangimakkalu, as they employ Brāhmans as priests instead of men of their own caste, burn their dead instead of burying them, hold annual ceremonies in memory of them, and prohibit the remarriage of widows. The Gangimakkalu were apparently engaged originally in all the pursuits connected with water, such as propelling boats, catching fish, and so forth, and they are especially numerous in villages along the banks of the Tungabhadra." Coracles are still used on various South Indian rivers, *e.g.*, the Cauvery, Bhavāni, and Tungabhadra. Tavernier, on

---

* Gazetteer of the Bellary district.

his way to Golgonda, wrote that "the boats employed in crossing the river are like large baskets, covered outside with ox-hides, at the bottom of which some faggots are placed, upon which carpets are spread to put the baggage and goods upon, for fear they should get wet." Bishop Whitehead has recently * placed on record his experiences of coracles as a means of conveyance. "We embarked," he writes, "in a boat (at Hampi on the Tungabhadra) which exactly corresponds to my idea of the coracle of the ancient Britons. It consists of a very large, round wicker basket, about eight or nine feet in diameter, covered over with leather, and propelled by paddles. As a rule, it spins round and round, but the boatmen can keep it fairly straight, when exhorted to do so, as they were on this occasion. Some straw had been placed in the bottom of the coracle, and we were also allowed the luxury of chairs to sit upon, but it is safer to sit on the straw, as a chair in a coracle is generally in a state of unstable equilibrium. I remember once crossing a river in the Trichinopoly district in a coracle, to take a confirmation at a village on the other side. It was thought more suitable to the dignity of the occasion that I should sit upon a chair in the middle of the coracle, and I weakly consented to do so. All the villagers were assembled to meet us on the opposite bank; four policemen were drawn up as a guard of honour, and a brass band, brought from Tanjore, stood ready in the background. As we came to the shore, the villagers salaamed, the guard of honour saluted, the band struck up a tune faintly resembling 'See the conquering hero comes,' the coracle bumped heavily against the shelving bank, my chair tipped up,

* Madras Diocesan Magazine, June, 1906.

and I was deposited, heels up, on my back in the straw! . . . . We were rowed for about two miles down the stream. The current was very swift, and there were rapids at frequent intervals. Darkness overtook us, and it was not altogether a pleasant sensation being whirled swiftly over the rapids in our frail-looking boat, with ugly rocks jutting out of the stream on either side. But the boatmen seemed to know the river perfectly, and were extraordinarily expert in steering the coracle with their paddles." The arrival in 1847 of the American Missionary, John Eddy Chandler at Madura, when the Vaigai river was in flood, has been described as follows.* "Coolies swimming the river brought bread and notes from the brethren and sisters in the city. At last, after three days of waiting, the new Missionaries safely reached the mission premises in Madura. Messrs. Rendall and Cherry managed to cross to them, and they all recrossed into the city by a large basket boat, eight or ten feet in diameter, with a bamboo pole tied across the top for them to hold on to. The outside was covered with leather. Ropes attached to all sides were held by a dozen coolies as they dragged it across, walking and swimming." In recent years, a coracle has been kept at the traveller's bungalow at Paikāra on the Nīlgiris for the use of anglers in the Paikāra river.

"The Kabbēras," Mr. Francis continues, "are at present engaged in a number of callings, and, perhaps in consequence, several occupational sub-divisions have arisen, the members of which are more often known by their occupational title than as either Gangimakkalu or Kabbēras. The Bārikes, for example, are a class of village servants who keep the village chāvadi (caste

* John S. Chandler, a Madura Missionary, Boston.

meeting house) clean, look after the wants of officials halting in the village, and do other similar duties. The Jalakaras are washers of gold-dust; the Madderu are dyers, who use the root of the maddi (*Morinda citrifolia*) tree; and apparently (the point is one which I have not had time to clear up) the Besthas, who have often been treated as a separate caste, are really a sub-division of the Gangimakkalu, who were originally palanquin-bearers, but, now that these vehicles have gone out of fashion, are employed in divers other ways. The betrothal is formally evidenced by the partaking of betel-leaf in the girl's house, in the manner followed by the Kurubas. As among the Mādigas, the marriage is not consummated for three months after its celebration. The caste follow the Kuruba ceremony of calling back the dead." Consummation is, as among the Kurubas and Mādigas, postponed for three months, as it is considered unlucky to have three heads of a family in a household during the first year of marriage. By the delay, the birth of a child should take place only in the second year, so that, during the first year, there will be only two heads, husband and wife. In the ceremony of calling back the dead, referred to by Mr. Francis, a pot of water is worshipped in the house on the eleventh day after a funeral, and taken next morning to some lonely place, where it is emptied.

For the following note on the Kabbēras of the Bellary district, I am indebted to Mr. Kothandram Naidu. The caste is sometimes called Ambiga. Breaches of caste rules and customs are enquired into by a panchayat presided over by a headman called Kattemaniavaru. If the fine inflicted on the offender is a heavy one, half goes to the headman, and half to the caste people, who spend it in drink. In serious cases,

the offender has to be purified by shaving and drinking holy water (thirtam) given to him by the headman. Both infant and adult marriage are practiced. Sexual license previous to marriage is tolerated, but, before that takes place, the contracting couple have to pay a fine to the headman. At the marriage ceremony, the tāli is tied on the bride's neck by a Brāhman. Married women carry painted new pots with lights, bathe the bride and bridegroom, etc. Widows are remarried with a ceremonial called Udiki, which is performed at night in a temple by widows, one of whom ties the tāli. No married men or women may be present, and music is not allowed. Divorce is said to be not permitted. In religion the Kabbēras are Vaishnavites, and worship various village deities. The dead are buried. Cloths and food are offered to ancestors during the Dasara festival, excepting those who have died a violent death. Some unmarried girls are dedicated to the goddess Hulugamma as Basavis (dedicated prostitutes).

Concerning an agricultural ceremony in the Bellary district, in which the Kabbēras take part, I gather that " on the first full-moon day in the month of Bhadrapada (September), the agricultural population celebrate a feast called Jokumara, to appease the rain-god. The Barikas (women), who are a sub-division of the Kabbēra caste belonging to the Gaurimakkalu section, go round the town or village in which they live, with a basket on their heads containing margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, flowers of various kinds, and holy ashes. They beg alms, especially of the cultivating classes (Kāpus), and, in return for the alms bestowed (usually grain and food), they give some of the margosa leaves, flowers, and ashes. The Kāpus, or cultivators, take the margosa leaves, flowers, and ashes to their fields, prepare cholum

(*Andropogon Sorghum*) kanji, mix these with it, and sprinkle this kanji, or gruel, all round their fields. After this, the Kāpu proceeds to the potter's kiln in the village or town, fetches ashes from it, and makes a figure of a human being. This figure is placed prominently in some convenient spot in the field, and is called Jokumara, or rain-god. It is supposed to have the power of bringing down the rain in proper time. The figure is sometimes small, and sometimes big." *

Kabbili.—Kabbili or Kabliga, recorded as a subdivision of Bestha, is probably a variant of Kabbēra.

Kadacchil (knife-grinder or cutler).—A sub-division of Kollan.

Kadaiyan.—The name, Kadaiyan, meaning last or lowest, occurs as a sub-division of the Pallans. The Kadaiyans are described † as being lime (shell) gatherers and burners of Rāmēsvaram and the neighbourhood, from whose ranks the pearl-divers are in part recruited at the present day. On the coasts of Madura and Tinnevelly they are mainly Christians, and are said, like the Paravas, to have been converted through the work of St. Francis Xavier.‡

Kadapēri.—A sub-division of Kannadiyan.

Kadavala (pots).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē.

Kādi (blade of grass).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kādir.—The Kādirs or Kādans inhabit the Ānaimalai or elephant hills, and the great mountain range which extends thence southward into Travancore. A night journey by rail to Coimbatore, and forty miles by

---

* Madras Mail, November, 1905.

† J. Hornell. Report on the Indian Pearl Fisheries of the Gulf of Manaar, 1905.

‡ Madras Diocesan Mag., 1906.

road at the mercy of a typically obstinate jutka pony, which landed me in a dense patch of prickly-pear (*Opuntia Dillenii*), brought me to the foot of the hills at Sēthumadai, where I came under the kindly hospitality of Mr. H. A. Gass, Conservator of Forests, to whom I am indebted for much information on forest and tribal matters gathered during our camp life at Mount Stuart, situated 2,350 feet above sea-level, in the midst of a dense bamboo jungle, and playfully named after Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, who visited the spot during his quinquennium as Governor of Madras.

At Sēthumadai I made the acquaintance of my first Kādir, not dressed, as I hoped, in a primitive garb of leaves, but wearing a coloured turban and the cast-off red coat of a British soldier, who had come down the hill to carry up my camp bath, which acted as an excellent umbrella, to protect him from the driving monsoon showers. Very glad was I of his services in helping to convey my clothed, and consequently helpless self, across the mountain torrents, swollen by a recent burst of monsoon rain.

The Kādir forest guards, of whom there are several in Government service, looked, except for their noses, very unjungle-like by contrast with their fellow-tribesmen, being smartly dressed in regulation Norfolk jacket, knickerbockers, pattis (leggings), buttons, and accoutrements.

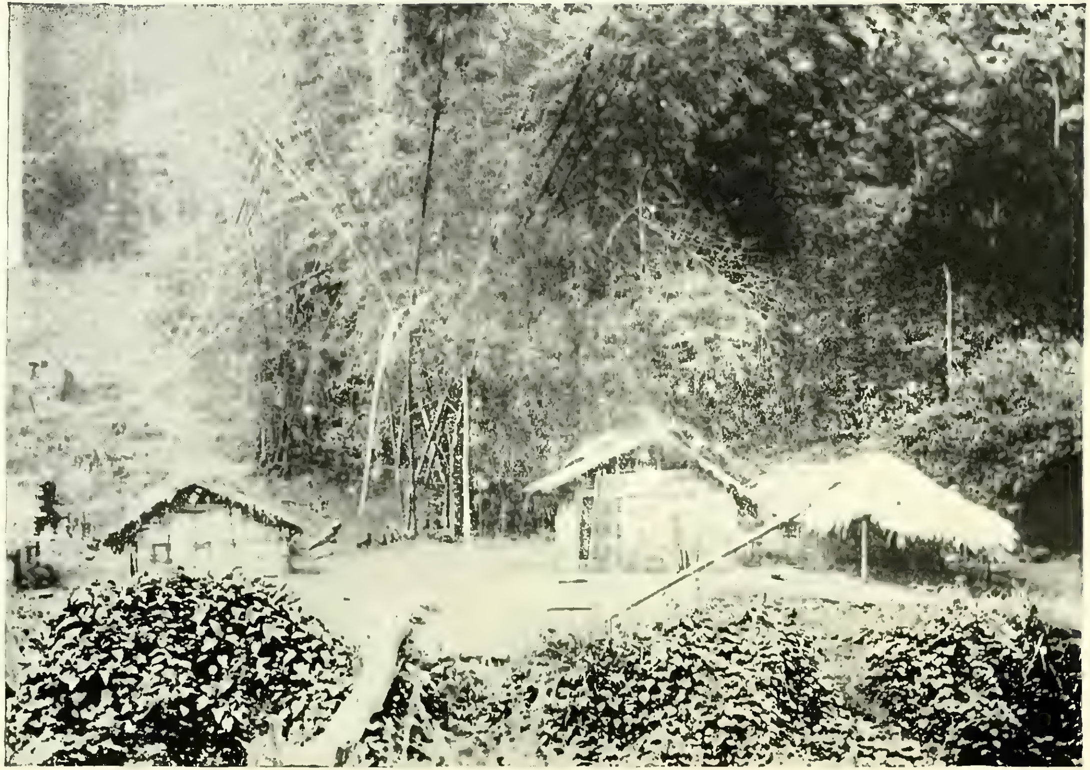
On arrival at the forest depôt, with its comfortable bungalows and Kādir settlement, I was told by a native servant that his master was away, as an "elephant done tumble in a fit." My memory went back to the occasion many years ago, when, as a medical student, I took part in the autopsy of an elephant, which died in convulsions at the London Zoological Gardens. It transpired later

in the day that a young and grown-up cow elephant had tumbled, not in a fit, but into a pit made with hands for the express purpose of catching elephants. The story has a philological significance, and illustrates the difficulty which the Tamulian experiences in dealing with the letter F. An incident is still cherished at Mount Stuart in connection with a sporting globe-trotter, who was accredited to the Conservator of Forests for the purpose of putting him on to "bison" (the gaur, *Bos gaurus*), and other big game. On arrival at the depôt, he was informed that his host had gone to see the "ellipence." Incapable of translating the pigeon-English of the native butler, and, concluding that a financial reckoning was being suggested, he ordered the servant to pay the baggage coolies their elli-pence, and send them away. To a crusted Anglo-Indian it is clear that ellipence could only mean elephants. Sir M. E. Grant Duff tells * the following story of a man, who was shooting on the Ānaimalais. In his camp was an elephant, who, in the middle of the night, began to eat the thatch of the hut, in which he was sleeping. His servant in alarm rushed in and awoke him, saying "Elephant, Sahib, must, must (mad)." The sleeper, half-waking and rolling over, replied "Oh, bother the elephant. Tell him he mustn't."

The salient characteristics of the Kādirs may be briefly summed up as follows: short stature, dark skin, platyrhine. Men and women have the teeth chipped. Women wear a bamboo comb in the back-hair. Those whom I met spoke a Tamil patois, running up the scale in talking, and finishing, like a Suffolker, on a higher note than they commenced on. But I am told that some

---

* Notes from a Diary, 1881-86.



KĀDIR HUTS.

of them speak a mixture of debased Tamil and Malayālam. I am informed by Mr. Vincent that the Kādirs have a peculiar word Āli, denoting apparently a fellow or thing, which they apply as a suffix to names, *e.g.*, Karaman Āli, black fellow; Mudi Āli, hairy fellow Kutti Āli, man with a knife; Pūv Āli, man with a flower. Among nicknames, the following occur: white mother, white flower, beauty, tiger, milk, virgin, love, breasts. The Kādirs are excellent mimics, and give a clever imitation of the mode of speech of the Muduvans, Malasars, and other hill tribes.

The Kādirs afford a typical example of happiness without culture. Unspoiled by education, the advancing wave of which has not yet engulfed them, they still retain many of their simple "manners and customs." Quite refreshing was it to hear the hearty shrieks of laughter of the nude curly-haired children, wholly illiterate, and happy in their ignorance, as they played at funerals, or indulged in the amusement of making mud pies, and scampered off to their huts on my appearance. The uncultured Kādir, living a hardy out-door life, and capable of appreciating to the full the enjoyment of an "apathetic rest" as perfect bliss, has, I am convinced, in many ways, the advantage over the poor under-fed student with a small-paid appointment under Government as the narrow goal to which the laborious passing of examination tests leads.

Living an isolated existence, confined within the thinly-populated jungle, where Nature furnishes the means of obtaining all the necessaries of life, the Kādir possesses little, if any, knowledge of cultivation, and objects to doing work with a māmuti, the instrument which serves the gardener in the triple capacity of spade, rake, and hoe. But armed with a keen-edged bill-hook

he is immense. As Mr. O. H. Bensley says: * "The axiom that the less civilised men are, the more they are able to do every thing for themselves, is well illustrated by the hill-man, who is full of resource. Give him a simple bill-hook, and what wonders he will perform. He will build houses out of etâh, so neat and comfortable as to be positively luxurious. He will bridge a stream with canes and branches. He will make a raft out of bamboo, a carving knife out of etâh, a comb out of bamboo, a fishing-line out of fibre, and fire from dry wood. He will find food for you where you think you must starve, and show you the branch which, if cut, will give you drink. He will set traps for beasts and birds, which are more effective than some of the most elaborate products of machinery." A European, overtaken by night in the jungle, unable to light fire by friction or to climb trees to gather fruits, ignorant of the edible roots and berries, and afraid of wild beasts, would, in the absence of comforts, be quite as unhappy and ill-at-ease as a Kādir surrounded by plenty at an official dinner party.

At the forest depôt the Kādir settlement consists of neatly constructed huts, made of bamboo deftly split with a bill-hook in their long axis, thatched with leaves of the teak tree (*Tectona grandis*) and bamboo (*Ochlandra travancorica*), and divided off into verandah and compartments by means of bamboo partitions. But the Kādirs are essentially nomad in habit, living in small communities, and shifting from place to place in the jungle, whence they suddenly re-appear as casually as if they had only returned from a morning stroll instead of a long camping expedition. When wandering in the jungle, the Kādirs

* Lecture delivered at Trivandrum, MS.



KADIR.

make a rough lean-to shed covered over with leaves, and keep a small fire burning through the night, to keep off bears, elephants, tigers, and leopards. They are, I am told, fond of dogs, which they keep chiefly as a protection against wild beasts at night. The camp fire is lighted by means of a flint and the floss of the silk-cotton tree (*Bombax malabaricum*), over which powdered charcoal has been rubbed. Like the Kurumbas, the Kādirs are not, in a general way, afraid of elephants, but are careful to get out of the way of a cow with young, or a solitary rover, which may mean mischief. On the day following my descent from Mount Stuart, an Oddē cooly woman was killed on the ghāt road by a solitary tusker. Familiarity with wild beasts, and comparative immunity from accident, have bred contempt for them, and the Kādirs will go where the European, fresh to elephant land, fears to tread, or conjures every creak of a bamboo into the approach of a charging tusker. As an example of pluck worthy of a place in Kipling's 'Jungle-book,' I may cite the case of a hill-man and his wife, who, overtaken by night in the jungle, decided to pass it on a rock. As they slept, a tiger carried off the woman. Hearing her shrieks, the sleeping man awoke, and followed in pursuit in the vain hope of saving his wife. Coming on the beast in possession of the mangled corpse, he killed it at close quarters with a spear. Yet he was wholly unconscious that he had performed an act of heroism worthy of the bronze cross 'for valour.'

The Kādirs carry loads strapped on the back over the shoulders by means of fibre, instead of on the head in the manner customary among coolies in the plains; and women on the march may be seen carrying the cooking utensils on their backs, and often have a child strapped on the top of their household goods. The dorsal position

of the babies, huddled up in a dirty cloth, with the ends slung over the shoulders and held in the hands over the chest, at once caught my eye, as it is contrary to the usual native habit of straddling the infants across the loins as a saddle.

Mr. Vincent informs me that "when the planters first came to the hills, the Kādirs were found practically without clothes of any description, with very few ornaments, and looking very lean and emaciated. All this, however, changed with the advent of the European, as the Kādirs then got advances in hard cash, clothes, and grain, to induce them to work. For a few years they tried to work hard, but were failures, and now I do not suppose that a dozen men are employed on the estates on the hills. They would not touch manure owing to caste scruples; they could not learn to prune; and with a mamoti (spade) they always promptly proceeded to chop their feet about in their efforts to dig pits." The Kādirs have never claimed, like the Todas, and do not possess any land on the hills. But the Government has declared the absolute right of the hill tribes to collect all the minor forest produce, and to sell it to the Government through the medium of a contractor, whose tender has been previously accepted. The contractor pays for the produce in coin at a fair market rate, and the Kādirs barter the money so obtained for articles of food with contractors appointed by Government to supply them with their requirements at a fixed rate, which will leave a fair, but not exorbitant margin of profit to the vendor. The principal articles of minor forest produce of the Ānaimalai hills are wax, honey, cardamoms, myrabolams, ginger, dammer, turmeric, deer horns, elephant tusks, and rattans. And of these, cardamoms, wax, honey, and rattans are the most important. Honey and wax are



KĀDIR.

collected at all seasons, and cardamoms from September to November. The total value of the minor produce collected, in 1897–98, in the South Coimbatore division (which includes the Ānaimalais) was Rs. 7,886. This sum was exceptionally high owing to a good cardamom crop. An average year would yield a revenue of Rs. 4,000—5,000, of which the Kādirs receive approximately 50 per cent. They work for the Forest Department on a system of short advances for a daily wage of 4 annas. And, at the present day, the interests of the Forest Department and planters, who have acquired land on the Ānaimalais, both anxious to secure hill men for labour, have come into mild collision.

Some Kādirs are good trackers, and a few are good shikāris. A zoological friend, who had nicknamed his small child his "little shikarī" (=little sportsman) was quite upset because I, hailing from India, did not recognise the word with his misplaced accent. One Kādir, named Viapoori Muppan, is still held in the memory of Europeans, who made a good living, in days gone by, by shooting tuskers, and had one arm blown off by the bursting of a gun. He is reputed to have been a much married man, greatly addicted to strong drinks, and to have flourished on the proceeds of his tusks. At the present day, if a Kādir finds tusks, he must declare the find as treasure-trove, and hand it over to Government, who rewards him at the rate of Rs. 15 to Rs. 25 per maund of 25 lb. according to the quality. Government makes a good profit on the transaction, as exceptionally good tusks have been known to sell for Rs. 5 per lb. If the find is not declared, and discovered, the possessor thereof is punished for theft according to the Act. By an elastic use of the word cattle, it is, for the purposes of the Madras Forest Act, made to include such a heterogeneous

zoological collection of animals as elephants, sheep, pigs, goats, camels, buffaloes, horses—and asses. This classification recalls to mind the occasion on which the Flying-fox or Fox-bat was included in an official list of the insectivorous birds of the Presidency; and, further, a report on the wild animals of a certain district, which was triumphantly headed with the "wild tattu," the long-suffering, but pig-headed country pony.

I gather, from an account of the process by one who had considerable knowledge of the Kādirs, that "they will only remove the hives of bees during dark nights, and never in the daytime or on moonlight nights. In removing them from cliffs, they use a chain made of bamboo or rattan, fixed to a stake or a tree on the top. The man, going down this fragile ladder, will only do so while his wife, or son watches above to prevent any foul play. They have a superstition that they should always return by the way they go down, and decline to get to the bottom of the cliff, although the distance may be less, and the work of re-climbing avoided. For hives on trees, they tie one or more long bamboos to reach up to the branch required, and then climb up. They then crawl along the branch until the hive is reached. They devour the bee-bread and the bee-maggots or larvæ, swallowing the wax as well." In a note on a shooting expedition in Travancore, * Mr. J. D. Rees, describing the collection of honey by the Kādirs of the southern hills, says that they "descend giddy precipices at night, torch in hand, to smoke out the bees, and take away their honey. A stout creeper is suspended over the abyss, and it is established law of the jungle that no brother shall assist in holding it. But it is more

---

* Nineteenth Century, 1898.

interesting to see them run a ladder a hundred feet up the perpendicular stem of a tree, than to watch them disappearing over a precipice. Axe in hand, the honey-picker makes a hole in the bark for a little peg, standing on which he inserts a second peg higher up, ties a long cane from one to the other, and by night—for the darkness gives confidence—he will ascend the tallest trees, and bring down honey without any accident." I have been told, with how much of truth I know not, that, when a Kādir goes down the face of a rock or precipice in search of honey, he sometimes takes with him, as a precautionary measure, and guarantee of his safety, the wife of the man who is holding the ladder above.

Often, when out on the tramp with the late Government Botanist, Mr. M. A. Lawson, I have heard him lament that it is impossible to train arboreal monkeys to collect specimens of the fruit and flowers of lofty forest trees, which are inaccessible to the ordinary man. Far superior to any trained Simian is the Kādir, who, by means of pegs or notches, climbs even the tallest masts of trees with an agility which recalls to memory the celebrated picture in "Punch," representing Darwin's 'Habit of climbing plants.' For the ascent of comparatively low trees, notches are made with a bill-hook, alternately right and left, at intervals of about thirty inches. To this method the Kādir will not have recourse in wet weather, as the notches are damp and slippery, and there is the danger of an insecure foot-hold.

An important ethnographic fact, and one which is significant, is that the detailed description of tree-climbing by the Dyaks of Borneo, as given by Wallace,* might have been written on the Ānaimalai hills, and would

* Malay Archipelago.

apply equally well in every detail to the Kādir. "They drove in," Wallace writes, "a peg very firmly at about three feet from the ground, and, bringing one of the long bamboos, stood it upright close to the tree, and bound it firmly to the two first pegs by means of a bark cord and small notches near the head of each peg. One of the Dyaks now stood on the first peg and drove in a third about level with his face, to which he tied the bamboo in the same way, and then mounted another step, standing on one foot, and holding by the bamboo at the peg immediately above him, while he drove in the next one. In this manner he ascended about twenty feet, when the upright bamboo became thin; another was handed up by his companion, and this was joined on by tying both bamboos to three or four of the pegs. When this was also nearly ended, a third was added, and shortly after the lowest branch of the tree was reached, along which the young Dyak scrambled. The ladder was perfectly safe, since, if any one peg were loose or faulty, the strain would be thrown on several others above and below it. I now understood the use of the line of bamboo pegs sticking in trees, which I had often seen."

In their search for produce in the evergreen forests of the higher ranges, with their heavy rainfall, the Kādirs became unpleasantly familiar with leeches and blue bottle flies, which flourish in the moist climate. And it is recorded that a Kādir, who had been gored and wounded by a bull 'bison,' was placed in a position of safety while a friend ran to the village to summon help. He was not away for more than an hour, but, in that short time, flies had deposited thousands of maggots in the wounds, and, when the man was brought into camp, they had already begun burrowing into the flesh, and were with difficulty extracted. On another occasion,



KĀDIR TREE-CLIMBING.

the eye-witness of the previous unappetising incident was out alone in the forest, and shot a tiger two miles or so from his camp. Thither he went to collect coolies to carry in the carcase, and was away for about two hours, during which the flies had, like the child in the story, 'not been idle,' the skin being a mass of maggots and totally ruined. I have it on authority that, like the Kotas of the Nīlgiris, the Kādirs will eat the putrid and fly-blown flesh of carcases of wild beasts, which they come across in their wanderings. To a dietary which includes succulent roots, which they upturn with a digging stick, bamboo seed, sheep, fowls, rock-snakes (python), deer, porcupines, rats (field, not house), wild pigs, monkeys, etc., they do credit by displaying a hard, well-nourished body. The mealy portion of the seeds of the *Cycas* tree, which flourishes on the lower slopes of the Ānaimalais, forms a considerable addition to the ménu. In its raw state the fruit is said to be poisonous, but it is evidently wholesome when cut into slices, thoroughly soaked in running water, dried, and ground into flour for making cakes, or baked in hot ashes. Mr. Vincent writes that, "during March, April, and May, the Kādirs have a glorious time. They usually manage to find some wild sago palms, called by them koondtha panai, of the proper age, which they cut down close to the ground. They are then cut into lengths of about 1½ feet, and split lengthways. The sections are then beaten very hard and for a long time with mallets, and become separated into fibre and powder. The powder is thoroughly wetted, tied in cloths and well beaten with sticks. Every now and then, between the beatings, the bag of powder is dipped in water, and well strained. It is then all put into water, when the powder sinks, and the water is poured off. The residue is well boiled,

with constant stirring, and, when it is of the consistency of rubber, and of a reddish brown colour, it is allowed to cool, and then cut in pieces to be distributed. This food stuff is palatable enough, but very tough." The Kādir is said to prefer roasting and eating the flesh of animals with the skin on. For catching rats, jungle-fowl, etc., he resorts to cunningly devised snares and traps made of bamboo and fibre, as a substitute for a gun. Porcupines are caught by setting fire to the scrub jungle round them as they lie asleep, and thus smoking and burning them to death.

When a Kādir youth's thoughts turn towards matrimony, he is said to go to the village of his bride-elect, and give her a dowry by working there for a year. On the wedding day a feast of rice, sheep, fowls, and other luxuries is given by the parents of the bridegroom, to which the Kādir community is invited. The bride and bridegroom stand beneath a pandal (arch) decorated with flowers, which is erected outside the home of the bridegroom, while men and women dance separately to the music of drum and fife. The bridegroom's mother or sister ties the tāli (marriage badge) of gold or silver round the bride's neck, and her father puts a turban on the head of the bridegroom. The contracting parties link together the little fingers of their right hands as a token of their union, and walk in procession round the pandal. Then, sitting on a reed mat of Kādir manufacture, they exchange betel. The marriage tie can be dissolved for incompatibility of temper, disobedience on the part of the wife, adultery, etc., without appeal to any higher authority than a council of elders, who pronounce judgment on the evidence. As an illustration of the manner in which such a council of hill-men disposes of cases, Mr. Bensley

cites the case of a man who was made to carry forty basket loads of sand to the house of the person against whom he had offended. He points out how absolute is the control exercised by the council. Disobedience would be followed by excommunication, and this would mean being turned out into the jungle, to obtain a living in the best way one could.

By one Kādir informant I was assured, as he squatted on the floor of my bungalow at "question time," that it is essential that a wife should be a good cook, in accordance with a maxim that the way to the heart is through the mouth. How many men in civilised western society, who suffer from marrying a wife wholly incompetent, like the first Mrs. David Copperfield, to conduct the housekeeping, might well be envious of the system of marriage as a civil contract to be sealed or unloosed according to the cookery results! Polygyny is indulged in by the Kādirs, who agree with Benedick that "the world must be peopled," and hold more especially that the numerical strength of their own tribe must be maintained. The plurality of wives seems to be mainly with the desire for offspring, and the father-in-law of one of the forest-guards informed me that he had four wives living. The first two wives producing no offspring, he married a third, who bore him a solitary male child. Considering the result to be an insufficient contribution to the tribe, he married a fourth, who, more prolific than her colleagues, gave birth to three girls and a boy, with which he remained content. In the code of polygynous etiquette, the first wife takes precedence over the others, and each wife has her own cooking utensils.

Special huts are maintained for women during menstruation and parturition. Mr. Vincent informs me that, when a girl reaches puberty, the friends of the

family gather together, and a great feast is prepared. All her friends and relations give her a small present of money, according to their means. The girl is decorated with the family jewelry, and made to look as smart as possible. For the first menstrual period, a special hut, called mutthu salai or ripe house, is constructed for the girl to live in during the period of pollution; but at subsequent periods, the ordinary menstruation hut, or unclean house, is used. All girls are said to change their names when they reach puberty. For three months after the birth of a child, the woman is considered unclean. When the infant is a month old, it is named without any elaborate ceremonial, though the female friends of the family collect together. Sexual intercourse ceases on the establishment of pregnancy, and the husband indulges in promiscuity. Widows are not allowed to re-marry, but may live in a state of concubinage. Women are said to suckle their children till they are two or three years old, and a mother has been seen putting a lighted cigarette to the lips of a year old baby immediately after suckling it. If this is done with the intention of administering a sedative, it is less baneful than the pellet of opium administered by ayahs (nurses) to Anglo-Indian babies rendered fractious by troubles climatic, dental, and other. The Kādir men are said to consume large quantities of opium, which is sold to them illicitly. They will not allow the women or children to eat it, and have a belief that the consumption thereof by women renders them barren. The women chew tobacco. The men smoke the coarse tobacco as sold in the bazars, and showed a marked appreciation of Spencer's Torpedo cheroots, which I distributed among them for the purposes of bribery and conciliation.

The religion of the Kādirs is a crude polytheism, and vague worship of stone images or invisible gods. It is, as Mr. Bensley expresses it, an ejaculatory religion, finding vent in uttering the names of the gods and demons. The gods, as enumerated and described to me, were as follows:—

(1) Paikutlātha, a projecting rock overhanging a slab of rock, on which are two stones set up on end. Two miles east of Mount Stuart.

(2) Athuvisariamma, a stone enclosure, ten to fifteen feet square, almost level with the ground. It is believed that the walls were originally ten feet high, and that the mountain has grown up round it. Within the enclosure there is a representation of the god. Eight miles north of Mount Stuart.

(3) Vanathavāthi. Has no shrine, but is worshipped anywhere as an invisible god.

(4) Iyappaswāmi, a stone set up beneath a teak tree, and worshipped as a protector against various forms of sickness and disease. In the act of worshipping, a mark is made on the stone with ashes. Two miles and a half from Mount Stuart, on the ghāt road to Sēthumadai.

(5) Māsanyātha, a female recumbent figure in stone on a masonry wall in an open plain near the village of Ānaimalai, before which trial by ordeal is carried out. The goddess has a high repute for her power of detecting thieves or rogues. Chillies are thrown into a fire in her name, and the guilty person suffers from vomiting and diarrhœa.

According to Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer,* the Kādirs are "worshippers of Kāli. On the occasion of

* Monograph. Ethnog: Survey of Cochin, No. 9, 1906.

the offering to Kāli, a number of virgins are asked to bathe as a preliminary to the preparation of the offering, which consists of rice and some vegetables cooked in honey, and made into a sweet pudding. The rice for this preparation is unhusked by these girls. The offering is considered to be sacred, and is partaken of by all men, women, and children assembled."

When Kādirs fall sick, they worship the gods by saluting them with their hands to the face, burning camphor, and offering up fruits, cocoanuts, and betel. Mr. Vincent tells me that they have a horror of cattle, and will not touch the ordure, or other products of the cow. Yet they believe that their gods occasionally reside in the body of a "bison," and have been known to do pūja (worship) when a bull has been shot by a sportsman. It is noted by Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer that wild elephants are held in veneration by them, but tame ones are believed to have lost the divine element.

The Kādirs are said, during the Hindu Vishu festival, to visit the plains, and, on their way, pray to any image which they chance to come across. They are believers in witchcraft, and attribute all diseases to the miraculous workings thereof. They are good exorcists, and trade in mantravādam or magic. Mr. Logan mentions* that "the family of famous trackers, whose services in the jungles were retained for H.R.H. the Prince of Wales' (now King Edward) projected sporting tour in the Ānamalai mountains, dropped off most mysteriously, one by one, shortly afterwards, stricken down by an unseen hand, and all of them expressing beforehand their conviction that they were under a certain individual's spell, and were doomed to certain death at an early date. They

* Malabar Manual.

were probably poisoned, but how it was managed remains a mystery, although the family was under the protection of a European gentleman, who would at once have brought to light any ostensible foul play."

The Kādir dead are buried in a grave, or, if death occurs in the depths of the jungles, with a paucity of hands available for digging, the corpse is placed in a crevice between the rocks, and covered over with stones. The grave is dug from four to five feet deep. There is no special burial-ground, but some spot in the jungle, not far from the scene of death, is selected. A band of music, consisting of drum and fife, plays weird dirges outside the hut of the deceased, and whistles are blown when it is carried away therefrom. The old clothes of the deceased are spread under the corpse, and a new cloth is put on it. It is tied up in a mat, which completely covers it, and carried to the burial-ground on a bamboo stretcher. As it leaves the hut, rice is thrown over it. The funeral ceremony is simple in the extreme. The corpse is laid in the grave on a mat in the recumbent posture, with the head towards the east, and with split bamboo and leaves placed all round it, so that not a particle of earth can touch it. No stone, or sepulchral monument of any kind, is set up to mark the spot. The Kādir believes that the dead go to heaven, which is in the sky, but has no views as to what sort of place it is. The story that the Kādirs eat their dead originated with Europeans, the origin of it being that no one had ever seen a dead Kādir, a grave, or sign of a burial-place. The Kādirs themselves are reticent as to their method of disposing of the dead, and the story, which was started as a joke, became more or less believed. Mr. Vincent tells me that a well-to-do Kādir family will perform the final death ceremonies eight days after death, but poorer

folk have to wait a year or more, till they have collected sufficient money for the expenses thereof. At cock-crow on the morning of the ceremonies, rice, called polli chor, is cooked, and piled up on leaves in the centre of the hut of the deceased. Cooked rice, called tullagu chor, is then placed in each of the four corners of the hut, to propitiate the gods, and to serve as food for them and the spirit of the dead person. At a short distance from the hut, rice, called kanal chor, is cooked for all Kādirs who have died, and been buried. The relations and friends of the deceased commence to cry, and make lamentations, and proclaim his good qualities, most of which are fictitious. After an hour or so, they adjourn to the hut of the deceased, where the oldest man present invokes the gods, and prays to them and to the heaped up food. A pinch from each of the heaps is thrown into the air as a gift of food to the gods, and those present fall to, and eat heartily, being careful to partake of each of the foodstuffs, consisting of rice, meat, and vegetables, which have been prepared.

On a certain Monday in the months of Ādi and Āvani, the Kādirs observe a festival called nōmbu, during which a feast is held, after they have bathed and anointed themselves with oil. It was, they say, observed by their ancestors, but they have no definite tradition as to its origin or significance. It is noted by Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer that, at the Ōnam festival, presents in the shape of rice, cloths, coats, turbans, caps, ear-rings, tobacco, opium, salt, oil and cocoanuts are distributed among the Kādirs by the Forest Department.

According to Mr. Bensley, "the Kādir has an air of calm dignity, which leads one to suppose that he had some reason for having a more exalted opinion of himself than that entertained for him by the outside world. A

forest officer of a philanthropic turn had a very high opinion of the sturdy independence and blunt honesty of the Kādir, but he once came unexpectedly round a corner, to find two of them exploring the contents of his portmanteau, from which they had abstracted a pair of scissors, a comb, and a looking glass." "The Kādirs," Mr. (now Sir F. A.) Nicholson writes,* "are, as a rule, rather short in stature, and deep-chested, like most mountaineers; and, like many true mountaineers, they rarely walk with a straight leg. Hence their thigh muscles are often abnormally developed at the expense of those of the calf. Hence, too, in part, their dislike to walking long distances on level ground, though their objection, mentioned by Colonel Douglas Hamilton, to carrying loads on the plains, is deeper-rooted than that arising from mere physical disability. This objection is mainly because they are rather a timid race, and never feel safe out of the forests. They have also affirmed that the low-country air is very trying to them." As a matter of fact, they very rarely go down to the plains, even as far as the village of Ānaimalai, only fifteen miles distant from Mount Stuart. One woman, whom I saw, had been as far as Palghāt by railway from Coimbatore, and had returned very much up-to-date in the matter of jewelry and the latest barbarity in imported piece-good body-cloth.

With the chest-girth of the Kādirs, as well as their general muscular development, I was very much impressed. Their hardiness, Mr. Conner writes, † has given rise to the observation among their neighbours that the Kādir and Kād Ānai (wild elephant) are much the same sort of animal.

* Manual of the Coimbatore district.

† Madras Journ. Lit. Science, I. 1833.

Perhaps the most interesting custom of the Kādirs is that of chipping all or some of the incisor teeth, both upper and lower, into the form of a sharp-pointed, but not serrated cone. The operation, which is performed with a chisel or bill-hook and file by members of the tribe skilled therein, on boys and girls, has been thus described. The girl to be operated on lies down, and places her head against a female friend, who holds her head firmly. A woman takes a sharpened bill-hook, and chips away the teeth till they are shaded to a point, the girl operated on writhing and groaning with the pain. After the operation she appears dazed, and in a very few hours the face begins to swell. Swelling and pain last for a day or two, accompanied by severe headache. The Kādirs say that chipped teeth make an ugly man or woman handsome, and that a person, whose teeth have not been thus operated on, has teeth and eats like a cow. Whether this practice is one which the Kādir, and Mala Vēdar of Travancore, have hit on spontaneously in comparatively recent times, or whether it is a relic of a custom resorted to by their ancestors of long ago, which remains as a stray survival of a custom once more widely practiced by the remote inhabitants of Southern India, cannot be definitely asserted, but I incline to the latter view.

A friendly old woman, with huge discs in the widely dilated lobes of the ears, and a bamboo five-pronged comb in her back-hair, who acted as spokesman on the occasion of a visit to a charmingly situated settlement in a jungle of magnificent bamboos by the side of a mountain stream, pointed out to me, with conscious pride, that the huts were largely constructed by the females, while the men worked for the sircar (Government). The females also carry water from the streams, collect



KĀDIR BOY WITH CHIPPED TEETH.

firewood, dig up edible roots, and carry out the sundry household duties of a housewife. Both men and women are clever at plaiting bamboo baskets, necklets, etc. I was told one morning by a Kādir man, whom I met on the road, as an important item of news, that the women in his settlement were very busy dressing to come and see me—an event as important to them as the dressing of a débutante for presentation at the Court of St. James'. They eventually turned up without their husbands, and evidently regarded my methods as a huge joke organised for the amusement of themselves and their children. The hair was neatly parted, anointed with a liberal application of cocoanut oil, and decked with wild flowers. Beauty spots and lines had been painted with coal-tar dyes on the forehead, and turmeric powder freely sprinkled over the top of the heads of the married women. Some had even discarded the ragged and dirty cotton cloth of every-day life in favour of a colour-printed imported sāri. One bright, good-looking young woman, who had already been through the measuring ordeal, acted as an efficient lady-help in coaching the novices in the assumption of the correct positions. She very readily grasped the situation, and was manifestly proud of her temporary elevation to the rank of standard-bearer to Government.

Dr. K. T. Preuss has drawn my attention to an article in Globus, 1899, entitled 'Die Zauberbilder Schriften der Negrito in Malaka,' wherein he describes in detail the designs on the bamboo combs worn by the Negritos of Malacca, and compares them with the strikingly similar design on the combs worn by the Kādir women. Dr. Preuss works out in detail the theory that the design is not, as I have elsewhere called it, a geometrical pattern, but consists of a series of hieroglyphics.

The collection of Kādir combs in the Madras Museum shows very clearly that the patterns thereon are conventional designs. The bamboo combs worn by the Semang women are stated * to serve as talismans, to protect them against diseases which are prevalent, or most dreaded by them. Mr. Vincent informs me that, so far as he knows, the Kādir combs are not looked on as charms, and the markings thereon have no mystic significance. A Kādir man should always make a comb, and present it to his intended wife just before marriage, or at the conclusion of the marriage ceremony, and the young men vie with each other as to who can make the nicest comb. Sometimes they represent strange articles on the combs. Mr. Vincent has, for example, seen a comb with a very good imitation of the face of a clock scratched on it.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish adolescent Kādir youths with curly fringe, chests covered by a cotton cloth, and wearing necklets made of plaited grass or glass and brass beads, from girls. And I was myself several times caught in an erroneous diagnosis of sex. Many of the infants have a charm tied round the neck, which takes the form of a dried tortoise foot; the tooth of a crocodile mimicking a phallus, and supposed to ward off attacks from a mythical water elephant which lives in the mountain streams; or wooden imitations of tiger's claws. One baby wore a necklet made of the seeds of *Coix Lachryma-Jobi* (Job's tears). Males have the lobes of the ears adorned with brass ornaments, and the nostril pierced, and plugged with wood. The earlobes of the females are widely dilated with palm-leaf rolls or huge wooden discs, and they wear ear-rings,

* W. W. Skeat and C. O. Blagden. Pagan Races of the Malay Peninsula, 1906.



KĀDIR GIRL WEARING COMB.

brass or steel bangles and finger-rings, and bead necklets.

It is recorded by Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer that the Kādirs are attached to the Rāja of Cochin "by the strongest ties of personal affection and regard. Whenever His Highness tours in the forests, they follow him, carry him from place to place in manjals or palanquins, carry sāman (luggage), and in fact do everything for him. His Highness in return is much attached to them, feeds them, gives them cloths, ornaments, combs, and looking-glasses."

The Kādirs will not eat with Malasars, who are beef-eaters, and will not carry boots made of cow-hide, except under protest.

Average stature 157·7 cm.; cephalic index 72·9; nasal index 89.

Kadlē.—Kadlē, Kallē, and Kadalē meaning Bengal gram (*Cicer arietinum*) have been recorded as exogamous septs or gōtras of Kurubas and Kurnis.

Kādu.—Kādu or Kāttu, meaning wild or jungle, has been recorded as a division of Golla, Irula, Korava, Kurumba, and Tōttiyan. Kādu also occurs as an exogamous sept or gōtra of the Kurnis. Kādu Konkani is stated, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, to mean the bastard Konkanis, as opposed to the Gōd or pure Konkanis. Kāttu Marāthi is a synonym for the bird-catching Kuruvikarans. In the Malabar Wynaad, the jungle Kurumbas are known as Kāttu Nāyakan.

Kādukuttukiravar.—A synonym, meaning one who bores a hole in the ear, for Koravas who perform the operation of piercing the lobes of the ears for various castes.

Kaduppattan.—The Kadupattans are said,* according to the traditional account of their origin, to have been Pattar Brāhmans of Kadu grāmam, who became degraded owing to their supporting the introduction of Buddhism. "The members of this caste are," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "at present mostly palanquin-bearers, and carriers of salt, oil, etc. The educated among them follow the profession of teaching, and are called Ezhuttacchan, *i.e.*, master of learning. Both titles are used in the same family. In the Native State of Cochin, the Kaduppattan is a salt-worker. In British Malabar he is not known to have followed that profession for some generations past, but it may be that, salt manufacture having long ago been stopped in South Malabar, he has taken to other professions, one of which is the carriage of salt. In manners and customs Kaduppattans resemble Nāyars, but their inheritance follows the male line." The Kaduppattans are described ‡ by Mr. Logan as "a caste hardly to be distinguished from the Nāyars. They follow a modified makkatayam system of inheritance, in which the property descends from father to son, but not from father to daughter. The girls are married before attaining puberty, and the bridegroom, who is to be the girl's real husband in after life, arranges the dowry and other matters by means of mediators (enangan). The tāli is tied round the girl's neck by the bridegroom's sister or a female relative. At the funeral ceremonies of this class, the barber caste perform priestly functions, giving directions and preparing oblation rice. A widow without male issue is removed on the twelfth day after her husband's death from his house to that of her own parents. And this is done even if she has female issue.

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district. † Madras Census Report, 1891.

‡ Manual of Malabar.

But, on the contrary, if she has borne sons to the deceased, she is not only entitled to remain at her husband's house, but she continues to have, in virtue of her sons, a joint right over his property."

Kahar.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the Kahars are returned as a Bengal caste of boatmen and fishermen. In the Mysore Census Report, it is noted that Kahar means in Hindustani a blacksmith, and that those censused were immigrants from the Bombay Presidency.

Kaikātti (one who shows the hand).—A division of the Kanakkans (accountants). The name has its origin in a custom, according to which a married woman is never allowed to communicate with her mother-in-law except by signs.*

Kaikōlan.—The Kaikōlans are a large caste of Tamil weavers found in all the southern districts, who also are found in considerable numbers in the Telugu country, where they have adopted the Telugu language. A legend is current that the Nāyakkan kings of Madura were not satisfied with the workmanship of the Kaikōlans, and sent for foreign weavers from the north (Patnūlkārans), whose descendants now far out-number the Tamil weavers. The word Kaikōlan is the Tamil equivalent of the Sanskrit Vīrabāhu, a mythological hero, from whom both the Kaikōlans and a section of the Paraiyans claim descent. The Kaikōlans are also called Sengundar (red dagger) in connection with the following legend. "The people of the earth, being harassed by certain demons, applied to Siva for help. Siva was enraged against the giants, and sent forth six sparks of fire from his eyes. His wife, Parvati, was frightened,

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

and retired to her chamber, and, in so doing, dropped nine beads from her anklets. Siva converted the beads into as many females, to each of whom was born a hero with full-grown moustaches and a dagger. These nine heroes, with Subramanya at their head, marched in command of a large force, and destroyed the demons. The Kaikōlans or Sengundar are said to be the descendants of Virabāhu, one of these heroes. After killing the demon, the warriors were told by Siva that they should become musicians, and adopt a profession, which would not involve the destruction or injury of any living creature, and, weaving being such a profession, they were trained in it." * According to another version, Siva told Parvati that the world would be enveloped in darkness if he should close his eyes. Impelled by curiosity, Parvati closed her husband's eyes with her hands. Being terrified by the darkness, Parvati ran to her chamber, and, on the way thither, nine precious stones fell from her anklets, and turned into nine fair maidens, with whom Siva became enamoured and embraced them. Seeing later on that they were pregnant, Parvati uttered a curse that they should not bring forth children formed in their wombs. One Padmasura was troubling the people in this world, and, on their praying to Siva to help them, he told Subramanya to kill the Asura. Parvati requested Siva not to send Subramanya by himself, and he suggested the withdrawal of her curse. Accordingly, the damsels gave birth to nine heroes, who, carrying red daggers, and headed by Subramanya, went in search of the Asura, and killed him. The word kaikōl is said to refer to the ratnavēl or precious dagger carried by Subramanya. The Kaikōlans, on the Sura Samharam

---

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

day during the festival of Subramanya, dress themselves up to represent the nine warriors, and join in the procession.

The name Kaikōlan is further derived from kai (hand), and kōl (shuttle). The Kaikōlans consider the different parts of the loom to represent various Dēvatas and Rishis. The thread is said to have been originally obtained from the lotus stalk rising from Vishnu's navel. Several Dēvas formed the threads, which make the warp; Nārada became the woof; and Vēdamuni the treadle. Brahma transformed himself into the plank (padamaram), and Adisēsha into the main rope.

In some places, the following sub-divisions of the caste are recognised :—Sōzhia ; Rattu ; Siru-tāli (small marriage badge); Peru-tāli (big marriage badge); Sirpādam, and Sevaghavritti. The women of the Siru and Peru-tāli divisions wear a small and large tāli respectively.

In religion, most of the Kaikōlans are Saivites, and some have taken to wearing the lingam, but a few are Vaishnavites.

The hereditary headman of the caste is called Peridanakāran or Pattakāran, and is, as a rule, assisted by two subordinates entitled Sengili or Grāmani, and Ūral. But, if the settlement is a large one, the headman may have as many as nine assistants.

According to Mr. H. A. Stuart,* "the Kaikōlans acknowledge the authority of a headman, or Mahānāttan, who resides at Conjeeveram, but itinerates among their villages, receiving presents, and settling caste disputes. Where his decision is not accepted without demur, he imposes upon the refractory weavers the expense of a

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

curious ceremony, in which the planting of a bamboo post takes part. From the top of this pole the Mahā-nāttan pronounces his decision, which must be acquiesced in on pain of excommunication." From information gathered at Conjeeveram, I learn that there is attached to the Kaikōlans a class of mendicants called Nattukattāda Nāyanmar. The name means the Nāyanmar who do not plant, in reference to the fact that, when performing, they fix their bamboo pole to the gōpuram of a temple, instead of planting it in the ground. They are expected to travel about the country, and, if a caste dispute requires settlement, a council meeting is convened, at which they must be present as the representatives of the Mahānādu, a chief Kaikōlan head-quarters at Conjeeveram. If the dispute is a complicated one, the Nattukattāda Nāyanmar goes to all the Kaikōlan houses, and makes a red mark with laterite * on the cloth in the loom, saying " Āndvarānai," as signifying that it is done by order of the headman. The Kaikōlans may, after this, not go on with their work until the dispute is settled, for the trial of which a day is fixed. The Nattukattāda Nāyanmars set up on a gōpuram their pole, which should have seventy-two internodes, and measure at least as many feet. The number of internodes corresponds to that of the nādus into which the Kaikōlan community is divided. Kamātchiamma is worshipped, and the Nattukattāda Nāyanmars climb up the pole, and perform various feats. Finally, the principal actor balances a young child in a tray on a bamboo, and, letting go of the bamboo, catches the falling child. The origin of the performance is said to have been as follows. The demon Sūran was troubling the Dēvas and men, and was

* A reddish formation found all over Southern India.

advised by Karthikēya (Subramanya) and Vīrabāhu to desist from so doing. He paid no heed, and a fight ensued. The demon sent his son Vajrabāhu to meet the enemy, and he was slain by Vīrabāhu, who displayed the different parts of his body in the following manner. The vertebral column was made to represent a pole, round which the other bones were placed, and the guts tightly wound round them. The connective tissues were used as ropes to support the pole. The skull was used as a jaya-mani (conquest bell), and the skin hoisted as a flag. The trident of Vīrabāhu was fixed to the top of the pole, and, standing over it, he announced his victory over the world. The Nattukattāda Nāyanmars claim to be the descendants of Vīrabāhu. Their head-quarters are at Conjeeveram. They are regarded as slightly inferior to the Kaikōlans, with whom ordinarily they do not intermarry. The Kaikōlans have to pay them as alms a minimum fee of four annas per loom annually. Another class of mendicant, called Ponnambalaththar, which is said to have sprung up recently, poses as true caste beggars attached to the Kaikōlans, from whom, as they travel about the country, they solicit alms. Some Kaikōlans gave Ontipuli as the name of their caste beggars. The Ontipulis, however, are Nokkans attached to the Pallis.

The Kaikōlan community is, as already indicated, divided into seventy-two nādus or dēsams, viz., forty-four mēl (western) and twenty-eight kīl (eastern) nādus. Intermarriages take place between members of seventy-one of these nādus. The great Tamil poet Ottaikūththar is said to have belonged to the Kaikōlan caste and to have sung the praises of all castes except his own. Being angry on this account, the Kaikōlans urged him to sing in praise of them. This he consented to do,

provided that he received 1,008 human heads. Seventy-one nādus sent the first-born sons for the sacrifice, but one nādu (Tirumarudhal) refused to send any. This refusal led to their isolation from the rest of the community. All the nādus are subject to the authority of four thisai nādus, and these in turn are controlled by the mahānādu at Conjeeveram, which is the residence of the patron deity Kamātchiamman. The thisai nādus are (1) Sīvapūram (Walajabad), east of Conjeeveram, where Kamātchiamman is said to have placed Nandi as a guard; (2) Thondipūram, where Thondi Vinayakar was stationed; (3) Virinjipūram to the west, guarded by Subramanya; (4) Sholingipūram to the south, watched over by Bairava. Each of the seventy-one nādus is sub-divided into kilai grāmams (branch villages), pērūr (big) and sithur (little) grāmams. In Tamil works relating to the Sengundar caste, Conjeeveram is said to be the mahānādu, and those belonging thereto are spoken of as the nineteen hundred, who are entitled to respect from other Kaikōlans. Another name for Kaikōlans of the mahānādu seems to be Āndavar; but in practice this name is confined to the headman of the mahānādu, and members of his family. They have the privilege of sitting at council meetings with their backs supported by pillows, and consequently bear the title Thindusarndān (resting on pillows). At present there are two sections of Kaikōlans at Conjeeveram, one living at Ayyampettai, and the other at Pillaipālayam. The former claim Ayyampettai as the mahānādu, and refuse to recognise Pillaipālayam, which is in the heart of Conjeeveram, as the mahānādu. Disputes arose, and recourse was had to the Vellore Court in 1904, where it was decided that Ayyampettai possesses no claim to be called the mahānādu.

Many Kaikōlan families have now abandoned their hereditary employment as weavers in favour of agriculture and trade, and some of the poorer members of the caste work as cart-drivers and coolies. At Coimbatore some hereditary weavers have become cart-drivers, and some cart-drivers have become weavers *de necessité* in the local jail.

In every Kaikōlan family, at least one girl should be set apart for, and dedicated to temple service. And the rule seems to be that, so long as this girl or her descendants, born to her or adopted, continue to live, another girl is not dedicated. But, when the line becomes extinct, another girl must be dedicated. All the Kaikōlans deny their connection with the Dēva-dāsi (dancing-girl) caste. But Kaikōlans freely take meals in Dāsi houses on ceremonial occasions, and it would not be difficult to cite cases of genuine Dāsis who have relationship with rich Kaikōlans.

Kaikōlan girls are made Dāsis either by regular dedication to a temple, or by the headman tying the tāli (nāttu pottu). The latter method is at the present day adopted because it is considered a sin to dedicate a girl to the god after she has reached puberty, and because the securing of the requisite official certificate for a girl to become a Dāsi involves considerable trouble.

"It is said," Mr. Stuart writes,* "that, where the head of a house dies, leaving only female issue, one of the girls is made a Dāsi in order to allow of her working like a man at the loom, for no woman not dedicated in this manner may do so."

Of the orthodox form of ceremonial in connection with a girl's initiation as a Dāsi, the following account

---

* *Op. cit.*

was given by the Kaikōlans of Coimbatore. The girl is taught music and dancing. The dancing master or Nattuvan, belongs to the Kaikōlan caste, but she may be instructed in music by Brāhman Bhāgavathans. At the tāli-tying ceremony, which should take place after the girl has reached puberty, she is decorated with jewels, and made to stand on a heap of paddy (unhusked rice). A folded cloth is held before her by two Dāsis, who also stand on heaps of paddy. The girl catches hold of the cloth, and her dancing master, who is seated behind her, grasping her legs, moves them up and down in time with the music, which is played. In the course of the day, relations and friends are entertained, and, in the evening, the girl, seated astride a pony, is taken to the temple, where a new cloth for the idol, the tāli, and various articles required for doing pūja, have been got ready. The girl is seated facing the idol, and the officiating Brāhman gives sandal and flowers to her, and ties the tāli, which has been lying at the feet of the idol, round her neck. The tāli consists of a golden disc and black beads. Betel and flowers are then distributed among those present, and the girl is taken home through the principal streets. She continues to learn music and dancing, and eventually goes through a form of nuptial ceremony. The relations are invited for an auspicious day, and the maternal uncle, or his representative, ties a gold band on the girl's forehead, and, carrying her, places her on a plank before the assembled guests. A Brāhman priest recites the mantrams, and prepares the sacred fire (hōmam). The uncle is presented with new cloths by the girl's mother. For the actual nuptials a rich Brāhman, if possible, and, if not, a Brāhman of more lowly status is invited. A Brāhman is called in, as he is next in importance to, and the representative of

the idol. It is said that, when the man who is to receive her first favours, joins the girl, a sword must be placed, at least for a few minutes, by her side. When a Dāsi dies, her body is covered with a new cloth removed from the idol, and flowers are supplied from the temple, to which she belonged. No pūja is performed in the temple till the body is disposed of, as the idol, being her husband, has to observe pollution.

Writing a century ago (1807) concerning the Kaikōlan Dāsis, Buchanan says * that "these dancing women, and their musicians, now form a separate kind of caste; and a certain number of them are attached to every temple of any consequence. The allowances which the musicians receive for their public duty is very small, yet, morning and evening, they are bound to attend at the temple to perform before the image. They must also receive every person travelling on account of the Government, meet him at some distance from the town, and conduct him to his quarters with music and dancing. All the handsome girls are instructed to dance and sing, and are all prostitutes, at least to the Brāhmans. In ordinary sets they are quite common; but, under the Company's government, those attached to temples of extraordinary sanctity are reserved entirely for the use of the native officers, who are all Brāhmans, and who would turn out from the set any girl that profaned herself by communication with persons of low caste, or of no caste at all, such as Christians or Mussulmans. Indeed, almost every one of these girls that is tolerably sightly is taken by some officer of revenue for his own special use, and is seldom permitted to go to the temple, except in his presence. Most of these officers have

* Journey through Mysore, Canara, and Malabar.

more than one wife, and the women of the Brāhmans are very beautiful ; but the insipidity of their conduct, from a total want of education or accomplishment, makes the dancing women to be sought after by all natives with great avidity. The Mussulman officers in particular were exceedingly attached to this kind of company, and lavished away on these women a great part of their incomes. The women very much regret their loss, as the Mussulmans paid liberally, and the Brāhmans durst not presume to hinder any girl who chose, from amusing an Asoph, or any of his friends. The Brāhmans are not near so lavish of their money, especially where it is secured by the Company's government, but trust to their authority for obtaining the favour of the dancers. To my taste, nothing can be more silly and unanimated than the dancing of the women, nor more harsh and barbarous than their music. Some Europeans, however, from long habit, I suppose, have taken a liking to it, and have even been captivated by the women. Most of them I have had an opportunity of seeing have been very ordinary in their looks, very inelegant in their dress, and very dirty in their persons ; a large proportion of them have the itch, and a still larger proportion are most severely diseased."

Though the Kaikōlans are considered to belong to the left-hand faction, Dāsis, except those who are specially engaged by the Bēri Chettis and Kammālans, are placed in the right-hand faction. Kaikōlan Dāsis, when passing through a Kammālan street, stop dancing, and they will not salute Kammālans or Bēri Chettis.

A peculiar method of selecting a bride, called siru tāli kattu (tying the small tāli), is said to be in vogue among some Kaikōlans. A man, who wishes to marry his maternal uncle's or paternal aunt's daughter, has to

tie a tāli, or simply a bit of cloth torn from her clothing, round her neck, and report the fact to his parents and the headman. If the girl eludes him, he cannot claim her, but, should he succeed, she belongs to him. In some places, the consent of the maternal uncle to a marriage is signified by his carrying the bride in his arms to the marriage pandal (booth). The milk-post is made of *Erythrina indica*. After the tāli has been tied, the bridegroom lifts the bride's left leg, and places it on a grinding-stone. Widows are stated by Mr. Stuart to be "allowed to remarry if they have no issue, but not otherwise; and, if the prevalent idea that a Kaikōla woman is never barren be true, this must seldom take place."

On the final day of the death ceremonies, a small hut is erected, and inside it stones, brought by the barber, are set up, and offerings made to them.

The following proverbs are current about or among the Kaikōlans:—

Narrate stories in villages where there are no Kaikōlans.

Why should a weaver have a monkey?

This, it has been suggested,* implies that a monkey would only damage the work.

On examining the various occupations, weaving will be found to be the best.

A peep outside will cut out eight threads.

The person who was too lazy to weave went to the stars.

The Chetti (money-lender) decreases the money, and the weaver the thread.

The titles of the Kaikōlans are Mūdali and Nāyanar.

* Rev. H. Jensen. Classified Collection of Tamil Proverbs, 1897.

Among the Kaikōlan musicians, I have seen every gradation of colour and type, from leptorhine men with fair skin and chiselled features, to men very dark and platyrhine, with nasal index exceeding 90.

The Kaikōlans take part in the annual festival at Tirupati in honour of the goddess Gangamma. "It is," Mr. Stuart writes,* "distinguished from the majority of similar festivals by a custom, which requires the people to appear in a different disguise (vēsham) every morning and evening. The Mātangi vēsham of Sunday morning deserves special mention. The devotee who consents to undergo this ceremony dances in front of an image or representation of the goddess, and, when he is worked up to the proper pitch of frenzy, a metal wire is passed through the middle of his tongue. It is believed that this operation causes no pain, or even bleeding, and the only remedy adopted is the chewing of a few margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, and some kunkumam (red powder) of the goddess. This vēsham is undertaken only by a Kaikōlan (weaver), and is performed only in two places—the house of a certain Brāhman and the Mahant's math. The concluding disguise is that known as the pērantālu vēsham. Pērantālu signifies the deceased married women of a family who have died before their husbands, or, more particularly, the most distinguished of such women. This vēsham is accordingly represented by a Kaikōlan disguised as a female, who rides round the town on a horse, and distributes to the respectable inhabitants of the place the kunkumam, saffron paste, and flowers of the goddess."

For the following account of a ceremony, which took place at Conjeeveram in August, 1908, I am indebted

---

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

to the Rev. J. H. Maclean. "On a small and very lightly built car, about eight feet high, and running on four little wheels, an image of Kāli was placed. It was then dragged by about thirty men, attached to it by cords passed through the flesh of their backs. I saw one of the young men two days later. Two cords had been drawn through his flesh, about twelve inches apart. The wounds were covered over with white stuff, said to be vibūthi (sacred ashes). The festival was organised by a class of weavers calling themselves Sankunram (Sengundar) Mudaliars, the inhabitants of seven streets in the part of Conjeeveram known as Pillaipalyam. The total amount spent is said to have been Rs. 500. The people were far from clear in their account of the meaning of the ceremony. One said it was a preventive of small-pox, but this view did not receive general support. Most said it was simply an old custom: what good it did they could not say. Thirty years had elapsed since the last festival. One man said that Kāli had given no commands on the subject, and that it was simply a device to make money circulate. The festival is called Pūntēr (flower car)."

In September, 1908, an official notification was issued in the Fort St. George Gazette to the following effect. "Whereas it appears that hook-swinging, dragging of cars by men harnessed to them by hooks which pierce their sides, and similar acts are performed during the Mariyamman festival at Samayapuram and other places in the Trichinopoly division, Trichinopoly district, and whereas such acts are dangerous to human life, the Governor in Council is pleased, under section 144, sub-section (5), of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1898, to direct that the order of the Sub-divisional Magistrate, dated the 7th August, 1908, prohibiting such acts, shall remain in force until further orders."

It is noted by Mr. F. R. Hemingway* that, at Ratnagiri, in the Trichinopoly district, the Kaikōlans, in performance of a vow, thrust a spear through the muscles of the abdomen in honour of their god Sāhānayanar.

Kaila (measuring grain in the threshing-floor).—An exogamous sept of Māla.

Kaimal.—A title of Nāyars, derived from kai, hand, signifying power.

Kaipūda.—A sub-division of Holeya.

Kaivarta.—A sub-division of Kevuto.

Kāka (crow).—The legend relating to the Kāka people is narrated in the article on Koyis. The equivalent Kākī occurs as a sept of Mālas, and Kāko as a sept of Kondras.

Kākara or Kākarla (*Momordica Charantia*).—An exogamous sept of Kamma and Mūka Dora.

Kākirekka-vāndlu (crows' feather people).—Mendicants who beg from Mutrāchas, and derive their name from the fact that, when begging, they tie round their waists strings on which crows', paddy birds' (heron) feathers, etc., are tied.

Kakka Kuravan.—A division of Kuravas of Travancore.

Kakkalan.—The Kakkalans or Kakkans are a vagrant tribe met with in north and central Travancore, who are identical with the Kakka Kuravans of south Travancore. There are among them four endogamous divisions called Kavitiyan, Manipparayan, Meluttan, and Chattaparayan, of which the two first are the most important. The Kavitiyans are further sub-divided into Kollak Kavitiyan residing in central Travancore,

---

* Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly district.

Malayālam Kavitiyan, and Pāndi Kavitiyan or immigrants from the Pāndyan country.

The Kakkalans have a legend concerning their origin to the effect that Siva was once going about begging as a Kapaladhārin, and arrived at a Brāhman street, from which the inhabitants drove him away. The offended god immediately reduced the village to ashes, and the guilty villagers begged his pardon, but were reduced to the position of the Kakkalans, and made to earn their livelihood by begging.

The women wear iron and silver bangles, and a palunka māla or necklace of variously coloured beads. They are tattooed, and tattooing members of other castes is one of their occupations, which include the following:—

Katukuttu, or boring the lobes of the ears.

Katuvaippu, or plastic operations on the ear, which Nāyar women and others who wear heavy pendant ear ornaments often require.

Kainokku or palmistry, in which the women are more proficient than the men.

Kompuvaippu, or placing the twig of a plant on any swelling of the body, and dissipating it by blowing on it.

Taiyyal, or tailoring.

Pāmpātam or snake dance, in which the Kakkalans are unrivalled.

Fortune telling.

The chief object of worship by the Kakkalans is the rising sun, to which boiled rice is offered on Sunday. They have no temples of their own, but stand at some distance from Hindu temples, and worship the gods thereof. Though leading a wandering life, they try to be at home for the Malabar new year, on which occasion they wear new clothes, and hold a feast. They do not observe the national Ōnam and Vishu festivals.

The Kakkalans are conspicuously polygamous, and some have as many as twelve wives, who are easily supported, as they earn money by their professional engagements. A first marriage must be celebrated on Sunday, and the festivities last from Saturday to Monday. Subsequent marriages may also be celebrated on Thursday. On the night of the day before the wedding, a brother, or other near relation of the bridegroom, places the sambandham (alliance) by bringing a fanam (coin), material for chewing, and cooked rice to the marriage pandal (booth). Fruit and other things are flung at him by the bride's people. On the following day the bridegroom arrives at the pandal, and, after raising the tāli (marriage badge) three times towards heaven, and, invoking a blessing from on high, ties it round the bride's neck. When a girl reaches puberty, a merry celebration is kept up for a week. The dead are buried. Inheritance is from father to son. A childless widow is a coparcener with the brothers of the deceased, and forfeits this right if she remarries.

Though in the presence of other castes the Kakkalans speak Malayālam, they have a peculiar language which is used among themselves, and is not understood by others.*

Kakkē (Indian laburnum : *Cassia fistula*).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kala.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nāyar.

Kalaikūttādi (pole-dancer).—A Tamil synonym of Dommara.

Kalāl.—A Hindustani synonym of Gamalla.

---

* For this note I am indebted to Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar.

Kalamkotti (potter).—An occupational title of Nāyar.

Kalāsi.—A name given to Vāda fishermen by Oriya people.

Kālava (channel or ditch).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē.

Kalavant.—The Kalavants are dancers and singers, who, like other dancing-girls, are courtesans. The name occurs not only in South Canara, but also in the Telugu country.

Kalinga.—A sub-division of Kōmatis, who "were formerly the inhabitants of the ancient Kalinga country. They are considered inferior to the other sub-divisions, on account of their eating flesh. Their titles are Subaddhi, Pātro, and Chaudari." * In the Ganjam Manual, they are described as "traders and shopkeepers, principally prevalent in the Chicacole division. The name Kling or Kaling is applied, in the Malay countries, including the Straits Settlements, to the people of peninsular India, who trade thither, or are settled in those regions." It is recorded by Dr. N. Annandale that the phrase Orang Ḳling Islam (*i.e.*, a Muhammadan from the Madras coast) occurs in Patani Malay.

Kālingi and Kālinji.—There has been some confusion, in recorded accounts, between these two classes. In the Ganjam Manual, the Kālinjis are described as agriculturists in that district, and, in the Vizagapatam Manual, the Kālingas or Kālingulu are stated to be cultivators in the Vizagapatam district, and a caste of Paiks or fighting men in Jeypore. In the Census Report, 1891, the Kālingis are said to be "most numerous in Ganjam, but there is a considerable number of

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

them in Vizagapatam also. The word means a native of Kālinga, the name of the sea-board of the Telugu country; the word Telugu itself is supposed by Dr. Caldwell to be a corruption of Tri-Kalinga. The three large sub-divisions of the caste are Buragam, Kintala, and Odiya. In the Kintala sub-division, a widow may remarry if she has no male issue, but the remarriage of widows is not allowed in other sub-divisions. The use of flesh and alcoholic liquor is permitted. Naidu and Chaudari are their titles." Further, in the Census Report, 1901, the Kālingis are described as follows: "A caste of temple priests and cultivators, found mainly in Ganjam and Vizagapatam, whither they are supposed to have been brought by the Kalinga kings to do service in the Hindu temples, before the advent of the Brāhmans. They speak either Oriya or Telugu. They have two sub-divisions, the Kintali Kālingas, who live south of the Langulya river, and the Buragam Kālingis, who reside to the north of it, and the customs of the two differ a great deal. There is also a third section, called Pandiri or Bevarani, which is composed of outcastes from the other two. Except the Kālingis of Mokhalingam in Vizagapatam,* they have headmen called Nayakabalis or Sāntos. They also have priests called Kularazus, each of whom sees to the spiritual needs of a definite group of villages. They are divided into several exogamous gōtras, each comprising a number of families or vamsas, some of which, such as Arudra, a lady-bird, and Revi-chettu, the *Ficus religiosa* tree, are of totemistic origin. Each section is said to worship its totem. Marriage before puberty is the rule, and the caste is remarkable for the proportion of its girls under twelve years of age who are married or widowed.

* Mokhalingam is in Ganjam, not Vizagapatam.

Widow marriage is not recognised by the Buragam Kālingis, but the Kintalis freely allow it. As usual, the ceremonies at the wedding of a widow differ from those at the marriage of a maid. Some turmeric paste is placed on a new cloth, which is then put over a pot of water, and the ceremony takes place near this. The binding portion of it is the tying of a saffron-coloured string to the woman's wrist. The Kālingis pay special reverence to Sri Radha Krishna and Chaitanya. Some of the caste officiate in temples, wear the sacred thread, and call themselves Brāhmans, but they are not received on terms of equality by other Brāhmans. All Kālingis bury their dead, but srāddhas (memorial services) are performed only by the Kintali sub-division. The Buragam Kālingis do not shave their heads in front. Kālingi women wear heavy bangles of brass, silver bell-metal and glass, extending from the wrist to the elbow. The titles of the castes are Naidu, Nayarlu, Chowdari, Bissōyi, Podhāno, Jenna, Swayi, and Naiko."

In the foregoing account, the Oriya-speaking Kālinjis, and Telugu-speaking Kālingis, are both referred to. The confusion seems to have arisen from the fact that the Kālinjis are sometimes called Kālingis by other castes. The Kālingis are essentially Telugus, and are found mainly on the borderland between the districts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam. The Kālinjis are, on the other hand, Oriyas, and seem to be closely allied to the agricultural castes, Doluva, Alia, Bosantiya, etc., like which they are mainly agriculturists. The Kālinjis can be easily distinguished from the Kālingis, as the latter wear the sacred thread. The following story is told in connection with the origin of the Kālinji caste. A band of robbers was once upon a time staying in a fort near Bhattu Kunnarade, and

molesting the people, who invited the king of Puri to come and drive the robbers away. Among the warriors who were recruited for this purpose, was a member of the Khondaito caste, who, with the permission of the king, succeeded in expelling the robbers. He was named by the people Bodo-Kālinja, or one having a stout heart. He and his followers remained in the Ganjam country, and the Kālinjis are their descendants. The caste is widespread in the northern part thereof.

There do not seem to be any sub-divisions among the Kālinjis, but there is a small endogamous group, called Mohiri Kālinji. Mohiri is a well-known division in Ganjam, and Kālinjis who dwell therein intermarry with others, and do not form a separate community. It has been suggested that the Mohiri Kālinjis are Telugu Kālingis, who have settled in the Oriya country. Like other Oriya castes, the Kālinjis have gōtras, *e.g.*, bāno (sun), sukro (star), sanko (conch-shell), bhāgo (tiger) and nāgo (cobra). There is a good deal of confusion regarding the gōtras in their connection with marriage. The same gōtra, *e.g.*, sukro, is exogamous in some places, and not so in others. Many titles occur among the Kālinjis, *e.g.*, Borado, Bissoyi, Bariko, Bēhara, Dolei, Gaudo, Jenna, Moliko, Naiko, Pātro, Podhāno, Pulleyi, Rāvuto, Sānto, Sāvu, Swayi, Guru. In some places, the titles are taken as representing bamsams (or vamsams), and, as such, are exogamous. Families as a rule refrain from marrying into families bearing the same title. For example, a Dolei man will not marry a Dolei girl, especially if their gōtras are the same. But a Dolei may marry a Pullei, even if they have the same gōtra.

The headman of the Kālinjis is styled Sānto, and he is assisted by a Pātro. There is also a caste messenger,

called Bhollobhaya. For the whole community there are said to be four Sāntos and four Pātros, residing at Attagada, Chinna Kimedi, Pedda Kimedi, and Mohiri. A man who is suffering from a wound or sore infested by maggots is said to be excommunicated, and, when he has recovered, to submit himself before the caste-council before he is received back into the community.

Girls are generally married before puberty, and, if a real husband is not forthcoming, a maid goes through a mock marriage ceremony with her elder sister's husband, or some elder of the community. A bachelor must be married to the sādo (*Streblus asper*) tree before he can marry a widow. The remarriage of widows (thuvathuvvi) is freely allowed. A widow, who has a brother-in-law, may not marry anyone else, until she has obtained a deed of separation (tsado pātro) from him. The marriage ceremonies conform to the standard Oriya type. In some places, the little fingers of the contracting couple are linked, instead of their hands being tied together with thread. On the fourth day, a Bhondāri (barber) places on the marriage dais some beaten rice and sugar-candy, which the bride and bridegroom sell to relations for money and grain. The proceeds of the sale are the perquisite of the Bhondāri. On the seventh day, the bridegroom breaks a pot on the dais, and, as he and the bride go away, the brother of the latter throws brinjal (*Solanum Melongena*) fruits at him.

The dead are as a rule cremated. On the day after death, food, made bitter by the addition of margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, is offered. A piece of bone is carried away from the burning-ground, and buried under a pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree. Daily, until the tenth day, water is poured seven times over the spot

where the bone is buried. On the tenth day, if the deceased was an elder of the community, the jola-jola handi ceremony is performed with a pot riddled with holes. (*See* Bhondāri.)

Kalkatta.—An occupation name for stone-masons in South Canara.

Kalkatti.—Kalkatti, denoting, it has been suggested, those who wear glass beads, is a sub-division of Idaiyan. The Lingāyats among Badagas of the Nīlgiri hills are called Kalkatti, because they hang a stone (the lingam) from their necks in a casket. Some Irulas of the same hills are also said to go by the name Kalkatti.

Kȧllā.—Recorded as a sub-division of Shānān, and of Idaiyans in localities where Kallans are most numerous.

Kallādi.—The title of a Cheruman who performs important duties, and becomes possessed by the spirit of the deceased, at a Cheruman funeral.

Kȧllādi Māngan.—A synonym of Mondi.

Kalladi Siddhan.—The name, meaning a beggar who beats himself with a stone, of a class of Telugu mendicants, who are very clamorous and persistent in their demands for alms. The name is applied as a term of contempt for any obstinate and troublesome individual. These beggars carry with them a gourd, have tortoise and cowry shells tied on their elbows, and carry an iron rod, with which they beat an iron ring worn on the hand. They present a very revolting spectacle, as they smear their bodies with rice done up so as to resemble vomit, and with the juice of the prickly-pear (*Opuntia Dillenii*), to make people believe that it is blood oozing from cuts made with a knife. They are said to be very fond of eating crows, which they catch with nets. (*See* Mondi.)

Kàllamu (threshing-floor).—An exogamous sept of Panta Reddi.

Kallàn.—Of the Kallans of the Madura district in the early part of the last century, an excellent account was written by Mr. T. Turnbull (1817), from which the following extract has been taken. "The Cullaries are said to be in general a brave people, expert in the use of the lance and in throwing the curved stick called vullaree taddee. This weapon is invariably in use among the generality of this tribe ; it is about 30 inches in curvature. The word Cullar is used to express a thief of any caste, sect or country, but it will be necessary to trace their progress to that characteristic distinction by which this race is designated both a thief, and an inhabitant of a certain Naud, which was not altogether exempted from paying tribute to the sovereign of Madura. This race appears to have become hereditary occupiers, and appropriated to themselves various Nauds in different parts of the southern countries ; in each of these territories they have a chief among them, whose orders and directions they all must obey. They still possess one common character, and in general are such thieves that the name is very justly applied to them, for they seldom allow any merchandize to pass through their hands without extorting something from the owners, if they do not rob them altogether, and in fact travellers, pilgrims, and Brāhmans are attacked and stript of everything they possess, and they even make no scruple to kill any caste of people, save only the latter. In case a Brāhman happens to be killed in their attempt to plunder, when the fact is made known to the chief, severe corporal punishment is inflicted on the criminals and fines levied, besides exclusion from society for a period of six months. The Maloor Vellaloor and

Serrugoody Nauds are denominated the Keelnaud, whose inhabitants of the Cullar race are designated by the appellation of Amblacaurs.

"The women are inflexibly vindictive and furious on the least injury, even on suspicion, which prompts them to the most violent revenge without any regard to consequences. A horrible custom exists among the females of the Colleries when a quarrel or dissension arises between them. The insulted woman brings her child to the house of the aggressor, and kills it at her door to avenge herself. Although her vengeance is attended with the most cruel barbarity, she immediately thereafter proceeds to a neighbouring village with all her goods, etc. In this attempt she is opposed by her neighbours, which gives rise to clamour and outrage. The complaint is then carried to the head Amblacaur, who lays it before the elders of the village, and solicits their interference to terminate the quarrel. In the course of this investigation, if the husband finds that sufficient evidence has been brought against his wife, that she had given cause for provocation and aggression, then he proceeds unobserved by the assembly to his house, and brings one of his children, and, in the presence of witness, kills his child at the door of the woman who had first killed her child at his. By this mode of proceeding he considers that he has saved himself much trouble and expense, which would otherwise have devolved on him. This circumstance is soon brought to the notice of the tribunal, who proclaim that the offence committed is sufficiently avenged. But, should this voluntary retribution of revenge not be executed by the convicted person, the tribunal is prorogued to a limited time, fifteen days generally. Before the expiration of that period, one of the children of that convicted

person must be killed. At the same time he is to bear all expenses for providing food, etc., for the assembly during those days.

"A remarkable custom prevails both among the males and females in these Nauds to have their ears bored and stretched by hanging heavy rings made of lead so as to expand their ear-laps (lobes) down to their shoulders. Besides this singular idea of beauty attached by them to pendant ears, a circumstance still more remarkable is that, when merchants or travellers pass through these Nauds, they generally take the precaution to insure a safe transit through these territories by counting the friendship of some individual of the Naud by payment of a certain fee, for which he deputes a young girl to conduct the travellers safe through the limits. This sacred guide conducts them along with her finger to her ear. On observing this sign, no Cullary will dare to plunder the persons so conducted. It sometimes happens, in spite of this precaution, that attempts are made to attack the traveller. The girl in such cases immediately tears one of her ear-laps, and returns to spread the report, upon which the complaint is carried before the chief and elders of the Naud, who forthwith convene a meeting in consequence at the Mundoopoolee.* If the violators are convicted, vindictive retaliation ensues. The assembly condemns the offenders to have both their ear-laps torn in expiation of their crime, and, if otherwise capable, they are punished by fines or absolved by money. By this means travellers generally obtain a safe passage through these territories. [Even at the present day, in quarrels between women of the lower castes, long ears form a favourite object of

* Place of meeting, which is a large tamarind tree, under which councils are held.

attack, and lobe-tearing cases figure frequently in police records.*]

"The Maloor Naud was originally inhabited and cultivated by Vellaulers. At a certain period some Cullaries belonging to Vella Naud in the Conjeeveram district proceeded thence on a hunting excursion with weapons consisting of short hand pikes, cudgels, bludgeons, and curved sticks for throwing, and dogs. While engaged in their sport, they observed a peacock resist and attack one of their hounds. The sportsmen, not a little astonished at the sight, declared that this appeared to be a fortunate country, and its native inhabitants and every living creature naturally possessed courage and bravery. Preferring such a country to their Naud in Conjeeveram, they were desirous of establishing themselves here as cultivators. To effect this, they insinuated themselves into the favour of the Vellaulers, and, engaging as their servants, were permitted to remain in these parts, whither they in course of time invited their relations and friends, and to appearance conducted themselves faithfully and obediently to the entire satisfaction of the Vellaulers, and were rewarded for their labour. Some time afterwards, the Vellaulers, exercising an arbitrary sway over the Cullaries, began to inflict condign punishment for offences and misdemeanours committed in their service. This stirred up the wrath of the Cullaries, who gradually acquired the superiority over their masters, and by coercive measures impelled them to a strict observance of the following rules :—

1*st*.—That, if a Culler was struck by his master in such a manner as to deprive him of a tooth, he was to pay a fine of ten cully chuckrums (money) for the offence.

* Gazetteer of the Madura district.

2nd.—That, if a Culler happened to have one of his ear-laps torn, the Vellauler was to pay a fine of six chuckrums.

3rd.—That if a Culler had his skull fractured, the Vellauler was to pay thirty chuckrums, unless he preferred to have his skull fractured in return.

4th.—That, if a Culler had his arm or leg broke, he was then to be considered but half a man. In such case the offender was required to grant the Culler one cullum of nunjah seed land (wet cultivation), and two koorkums of punjah (dry cultivation), to be held and enjoyed in perpetuity, exclusive of which the Vellauler was required to give the Culler a doopettah (cloth) and a cloth for his wife, twenty cullums of paddy or any other grain, and twenty chuckrums in money for expenses.

5th.—That, if a Culler was killed, the offender was required to pay either a fine of a hundred chuckrums, or be subject to the vengeance of the injured party. Until either of these alternatives was agreed to, and satisfaction afforded, the party injured was at liberty to plunder the offender's property, never to be restored.

"By this hostile mode of conduct imposed on their masters, together with their extravagant demands, the Vellaulers were reduced to that dread of the Cullers as to court their favour, and became submissive to their will and pleasure, so that in process of time the Cullers not only reduced them to poverty, but also induced them to abandon their villages and hereditary possessions, and to emigrate to foreign countries. Many were even murdered in total disregard of their former solemn promises of fidelity and attachment. Having thus implacably got rid of their original masters and expelled them from their Naud, they became the rulers of it, and denominated it by the singular appellation of Tun Arrasa Naud,

signifying a forest only known to its possessors [or tanarasu-nād, *i.e.*, the country governed by themselves].* In short, these Colleries became so formidable at length as to evince a considerable ambition, and to set the then Government at defiance. Allagar Swamy they regarded as the God of their immediate devotion, and, whenever their enterprizes were attended with success, they never failed to be liberal in the performance of certain religious ceremonies to Allagar. To this day they invoke the name of Allagar in all what they do, and they make no objection in contributing whatever they can when the Stalaters come to their villages to collect money or grain for the support of the temple, or any extraordinary ceremonies of the God. The Cullers of this Naud, in the line of the Kurtaukles, once robbed and drove away a large herd of cows belonging to the Prince, who, on being informed of the robbery, and that the calves were highly distressed for want of nourishment, ordered them to be drove out of and left with the cows, wherever they were found. The Cullers were so exceedingly pleased with this instance of the Kurtaukle's goodness and greatness of mind that they immediately collected a thousand cows (at one cow from every house) in the Naud as a retribution, and drove them along with the plundered cattle to Madura. Whenever a quarrel or dispute happens among them, the parties arrest each other in the name of the respective Amblacaurs, whom they regard as most sacred, and they will only pay their homage to those persons convened as arbitrators or punjayems to settle their disputes.

" During the feudal system that prevailed among these Colleries for a long time, they would on no

* Gazetteer of the Madura district.

consideration permit the then Government to have any control or authority over them. When tribute was demanded, the Cullers would answer with contempt: 'The heavens supply the earth with rain, our cattle plough, and we labour to improve and cultivate the land. While such is the case, we alone ought to enjoy the fruits thereof. What reason is there that we should be obedient, and pay tribute to our equal?'

"During the reign of Vizia Ragoonada Saitooputty* a party of Colleries, having proceeded on a plundering excursion into the Rāmnād district, carried off two thousand of the Rāja's own bullocks. The Rāja was so exasperated that he caused forts to be erected at five different places in the Shevagunga and Rāmnād districts, and, on pretext of establishing a good understanding with these Nauttams, he artfully invited the principal men among them, and, having encouraged them by repeatedly conferring marks of his favour, caused a great number to be slain, and a number of their women to be transported to Ramiserum, where they were branded with the marks of the pagoda, and made Deva Dassies or dancing girls and slaves of the temple. The present dancing girls in that celebrated island are said to be the descendants of these women of the Culler tribe." In the eighteenth century a certain Captain Rumley was sent with troops to check the turbulent Colleries. "He became the terror of the Collerie Naud, and was highly respected and revered by the designation of Rumley Swamy, under which appellation the Colleries afterwards distinguished him." It is on record that, during the Trichinopoly war, the horses of Clive and Stringer Lawrence were stolen by two Kallan brothers.

* Sētupati, or lord of the bridge. The title of the Rājas of Rāmnād.

Tradition says that one of the rooms in Tirumala Nāyakkan's palace at Madura "was Tirumala's sleeping apartment, and that his cot hung by long chains from hooks in the roof. One night, says a favourite story, a Kallan made a hole in the roof, swarmed down the chains, and stole the royal jewels. The king promised a jaghir (grant of land) to anyone who would bring him the thief, and the Kallan then gave himself up and claimed the reward. The king gave him the jaghir, and then promptly had him beheaded." *

By Mr. H. A. Stuart † the Kallans are said to be "a middle-sized dark-skinned tribe found chiefly in the districts of Tanjore, Trichinopoly and Madura, and in the Pudukōta territory. The name Kallan is commonly derived from Tamil kallam, which means theft. Mr. Nelson ‡ expresses some doubts as to the correctness of this derivation, but Dr. Oppert accepts it, and no other has been suggested. The original home of the Kallans appears to have been Tondamandalam or the Pallava country, and the head of the class, the Rāja of Pudukōta, is to this day called the Tondaman. There are good grounds for believing that the Kallans are a branch of the Kurumbas, who, when they found their regular occupation as soldiers gone, 'took to maraudering, and made themselves so obnoxious by their thefts and robberies, that the term kallan, thief, was applied, and stuck to them as a tribal appellation.' § The Rev. W. Taylor, the compiler of the Catalogue Raisonné of Oriental Manuscripts, also identifies the Kallans with the Kurumbas, and Mr. Nelson accepts this conclusion. In the census returns, Kurumban is returned as one of the sub-divisions of the Kallan caste.'

* Gazetteer of the Madura district. † Madras Census Report, 1891.

‡ Manual of the Madura district.

§ G. Oppert. Madras Journ. Lit. Science, 1888–9.

"The Chōla country, or Tanjore," Mr. W. Francis writes,* "seems to have been the original abode of the Kallans before their migration to the Pāndya kingdom after its conquest by the Chōlas about the eleventh century A.D. But in Tanjore they have been greatly influenced by the numerous Brāhmans there, and have taken to shaving their heads and employing Brāhmans as priests. At their weddings also the bridegroom ties the tāli himself, while elsewhere his sister does it. Their brethren across the border in Madura continue to merely tie their hair in a knot, and employ their own folk to officiate as their priests. This advance of one section will doubtless in time enhance the social estimation of the caste as a whole."

It is further noted, in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district, that the ambitions of the Kallans have been assisted "by their own readiness, especially in the more advanced portions of the district, to imitate the practices of Brāhmans and Vellālans. Great variations thus occur in their customs in different localities, and a wide gap exists between the Kallans of this district as a whole and those of Madura."

In the Manual of the Tanjore district, it is stated that "profitable agriculture, coupled with security of property in land, has converted the great bulk of the Kallar and Padeiyachi classes into a contented and industrious population. They are now too fully occupied with agriculture, and the incidental litigation, to think of their old lawless pursuits, even if they had an inclination to follow them. The bulk of the ryotwari proprietors in that richly cultivated part of the Cauvery delta which constituted the greater part of the old tāluk of Tiruvādi

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

are Kallars, and, as a rule, they are a wealthy and well-to-do class. The Kallar ryots, who inhabit the villages along the banks of the Cauvery, in their dress and appearance generally look quite like Vellālas. Some of the less romantic and inoffensive characteristics of the Kallars in Madura and Tinnevelly are found among the recent immigrants from the south, who are distinguished from the older Kallar colonies by the general term Terkattiyār, literally southerns, which includes emigrants of other castes from the south. The Terkattiyārs are found chiefly in the parts of the district which border on Pudukōta. Kallars of this group grow their hair long all over the head exactly like women, and both men and women enlarge the holes in the lobes of their ears to an extraordinary size by inserting rolls of palm-leaf into them." The term Terkattiyār is applied to Kallan, Maravan, Agamudaiyan, and other immigrants into the Tanjore district. At Mayaveram, for example, it is applied to Kallans, Agamudaiyans, and Valaiyans. It is noted, in the Census Report, 1891, that Agamudaiyan and Kallan were returned as sub-divisions of Maravans by a comparatively large number of persons. "Maravan is also found among the sub-divisions of Kallan, and there can be little doubt that there is a very close connection between Kallans, Maravans, and Agamudaiyans." "The origin of the Kallar caste," Mr. F. S. Mullaly writes,* "as also that of the Maravars and Ahambadayars, is mythologically traced to Indra and Aghalia, the wife of Rishi Gautama. The legend is that Indra and Rishi Gautama were, among others, rival suitors for the hand of Aghalia. Rishi Gautama was the successful one. This so incensed Indra that he

* Notes on Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency.

determined to win Aghalia at all hazards, and, by means of a cleverly devised ruse, succeeded, and Aghalia bore him three sons, who respectively took the names Kalla, Marava, and Ahambadya. The three castes have the agnomen Thēva or god, and claim to be descendants of Thēvan (Indra)." According to another version of the legend "once upon a time Rishi Gautama left his house to go abroad on business. Dēvendra, taking advantage of his absence, debauched his wife, and three children were the result. When the Rishi returned, one of the three hid himself behind a door, and, as he thus acted like a thief, he was henceforward called Kallan. Another got up a tree, and was therefore called Maravan from maram, a tree, whilst the third brazened it out and stood his ground, thus earning for himself the name of Ahamudeiyan, or the possessor of pride. This name was corrupted into Ahambadiyan."* There is a Tamil proverb that a Kallan may come to be a Maravan. By respectability he may develop into an Agamudaiyan, and, by slow and small degrees, become a Vellāla, from which he may rise to be a Mudaliar.

"The Kallans," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,† "will eat flesh, excepting beef, and have no scruples regarding the use of intoxicating liquor. They are usually farmers or field-labourers, but many of them are employed as village or other watchmen, and not a few depend for their subsistence upon the proceeds of thefts and robberies. In Trichinopoly town, householders are obliged to keep a member of the Kallan caste in their service as a protection against the depredations of these thieves, and any refusal to give in to this custom invariably results in loss of property. On the other

* Madras Review, 1899.

† Madras Census Report, 1891.

hand, if a theft should, by any chance, be committed in a house where a Kallan is employed, the articles stolen will be recovered, and returned to the owner. In Madura town, I am informed, a tax of four annas per annum is levied on houses in certain streets by the head of the Kallan caste in return for protection against theft." In the Census Report, 1901, Mr. Francis records that "the Kallans, Maravans, and Agamudaiyans are responsible for a share of the crime of the southern districts, which is out of all proportion to their strength in them. In 1897, the Inspector-General of Prisons reported that nearly 42 per cent. of the convicts in the Madura jail, and 30 per cent. of those in the Palamcottah jail in Tinnevelly, belonged to one or other of these three castes. In Tinnevelly, in 1894, 131 cattle thefts were committed by men of these three castes against 47 by members of others, which is one theft to 1,497 of the population of the three bodies against one to 37,830 of the other castes. The statistics of their criminality in Trichinopoly and Madura were also bad. The Kallans had until recently a regular system of blackmail, called kudikāval, under which each village paid certain fees to be exempt from theft. The consequences of being in arrears with their payments quickly followed in the shape of cattle thefts and 'accidental' fires in houses. In Madura the villagers recently struck against this extortion. The agitation was started by a man of the Idaiyan or shepherd caste, which naturally suffered greatly by the system, and continued from 1893 to 1896." The origin of the agitation is said * to have been the anger of certain of the Idaiyans with a Kallan Lothario, who enticed away a woman of their caste, and afterwards her daughter, and

* Gazetteer of the Madura district.

kept both women simultaneously under his protection. The story of this anti-Kallan agitation is told as follows in the Police Administration Report, 1896. "Many of the Kallans are the kavalgars of the villages under the kaval system. Under that system the kavalgars receive fees, and in some cases rent-free land for undertaking to protect the property of the villagers against theft, or to restore an equivalent in value for anything lost. The people who suffer most at the hands of the Kallars are the shepherds (Kōnans or Idaiyans). Their sheep and goats form a convenient subject for the Kallar's raids. They are taken for kaval fees alleged to be overdue, and also stolen, again to be restored on the payment of blackmail. The anti-Kallar movement was started by a man of the shepherd caste, and rapidly spread. Meetings of villagers were held, at which thousands attended. They took oath on their ploughs to dispense with the services of the Kallars; they formed funds to compensate such of them as lost their cattle, or whose houses were burnt; they arranged for watchmen among themselves to patrol the villages at night; they provided horns to be sounded to carry the alarm in cases of theft from village to village, and prescribed a regular scale of fines to be paid by those villagers who failed to turn out on the sound of the alarm. The Kallans in the north in many cases sold their lands, and left their villages, but in some places they showed fight. For six months crime is said to have ceased absolutely, and, as one deponent put it, people even left their buckets at the wells. In one or two places the Kallans gathered in large bodies in view to overawe the villagers, and riots followed. In one village there were three murders, and the Kallar quarter was destroyed by fire, but whether the fire was the work of Kōnans or Kallars has never been discovered. In

August, large numbers of villagers attacked the Kallars in two villages in the Dindigul division, and burnt the Kallar quarters."

"The crimes," Mr. F. S. Mullaly writes,* "that Kallars are addicted to are dacoity in houses or on highways, robbery, house-breaking and cattle-stealing. They are usually armed with vellari thadis or clubs (the so-called boomerangs) and occasionally with knives similar to those worn by the inhabitants of the western coast. Their method of house-breaking is to make the breach in the wall under the door. A lad of diminutive size then creeps in, and opens the door for the elders. Jewels worn by sleepers are seldom touched. The stolen property is hidden in convenient places, in drains, wells, or straw stacks, and is sometimes returned to the owner on receipt of blackmail from him called tuppu-kūli or clue hire. The women seldom join in crimes, but assist the men in their dealings (for disposal of the stolen property) with the Chettis." It is noted by the Abbé Dubois that the Kallars "regard a robber's occupation as discreditable neither to themselves, nor to their fellow castemen, for the simple reason that they consider robbery a duty, and a right sanctioned by descent. If one were to ask of a Kallar to what people he belonged, he would coolly answer, I am a robber."

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that "dacoity of travellers at night used to be the favourite pastime of the Kallans, and their favourite haunts the various roads leading out of Madura, and that from Ammayanāyakkanūr to Periyakulam. The method adopted consisted in threatening the driver of the cart, and then turning the vehicle into the ditch so

---

* *Op. cit.*

that it upset. The unfortunate travellers were then forced by some of the gang to sit at the side of the road, with their backs to the cart and their faces to the ground, while their baggage was searched for valuables by the remainder. The gangs which frequented these roads have now broken up, and the caste has practically quitted road dacoity for the simpler, more paying, and less risky business of stealing officials' office-boxes and ryots' cattle. Cattle-theft is now the most popular calling among them. They are clever at handling animals, and probably the popularity of the jallikats (*see* Maravan) has its origin in the demands of a life, which always included much cattle-lifting. The stolen animals are driven great distances (as much as 20 or 30 miles) on the night of the theft, and are then hidden for the day either in a friend's house, or among hills and jungles. The next night they are taken still further, and again hidden. Pursuit is by this time hopeless, as the owner has no idea even in which direction to search. He, therefore, proceeds to the nearest go-between (these individuals are well-known to every one), and offers him a reward if he will bring back the cattle. This reward is called tuppu-kūli, or payment for clues, and is very usually as much as half the value of the animals stolen. The Kallan undertakes to search for the lost bullocks, returns soon, and states that he has found them, receives his tuppu-kūli, and then tells the owner of the property that, if he will go to a spot named, which is usually in some lonely neighbourhood, he will find his cattle tied up there. This information is always correct. If, on the other hand, the owner reports the theft to the police, no Kallan will help him to recover his animals, and these are eventually sold in other districts or Travancore, or even sent across from Tuticorin to Ceylon. Consequently,

hardly any cattle-thefts are ever reported to the police. Where the Kallans are most numerous, the fear of incendiarism induces people to try to afford a tiled or terraced roof, instead of being content with thatch. The cattle are always tied up in the houses at night. Fear of the Kallans prevents them from being left in the fields, and they may be seen coming into the villages every evening in scores, choking every one with the dust they kick up, and polluting the village site (instead of manuring the land) for twelve hours out of every twenty-four. Buffaloes are tied up outside the houses. Kallans do not care to steal them, as they are of little value, are very troublesome when a stranger tries to handle them, and cannot travel fast or far enough to be out of reach of detection by daybreak. The Kallans' inveterate addiction to dacoity and theft render the caste to this day a thorn in the flesh of the authorities. A very large proportion of the thefts committed in the district are attributable to them. Nor are they ashamed of the fact. One of them defended his class by urging that every other class stole, the official by taking bribes, the vakil (law pleader) by fostering animosities, and so pocketing fees, the merchant by watering the arrack (spirit) and sanding the sugar, and so on, and that the Kallans differed from these only in the directness of their methods. Round about Mēlūr, the people of the caste are taking energetically to wet cultivation, to the exclusion of cattle-lifting, with the Periyār water, which has lately been brought there. In some of the villages to the south of that town, they have drawn up a formal agreement (which has been solemnly registered, and is most rigorously enforced by the headmen), forbidding theft, recalling all the women who have emigrated to Ceylon and elsewhere, and, with an enlightenment which puts

other communities to shame, prohibiting several other unwise practices which are only too common, such as the removal from the fields of cow-dung for fuel, and the pollution of drinking-water tanks (ponds) by stepping into them. Hard things have been said about the Kallans, but points to their credit are the chastity of their women, the cleanliness they observe in and around their villages, and their marked sobriety. A toddy-shop in a Kallan village is seldom a financial success."

From a recent note,* I gather the following additional information concerning tuppu-kuli. "The Kallans are largely guilty of cattle-thefts. In many cases, they return the cattle on receiving tuppu-kuli. The official returns do not show many of these cases. No cattle-owner thinks of reporting the loss of any of his cattle. Naturally his first instinct is that it might have strayed away, being live property. The tuppu-kuli system generally helps the owner to recover his lost cattle. He has only to pay half of its real value, and, when he recovers his animal, he goes home with the belief that he has really made a profitable bargain. There is no matter for complaint, but, on the other hand, he is glad that he got back his animal for use, often at the most opportune time. Cattle are indispensable to the agriculturist at all times of the year. Perhaps, sometimes, when the rains fail, he may not use them. But if, after a long drought, there is a shower, immediately every agriculturist runs to his field with his plough and cattle, and tills it. If, at such a time, his cattle be stolen, he considers as though he were beaten on his belly, and his means of livelihood gone. No cattle will be available then for hire. There is nothing that he will not part

* Illustrated Criminal Investigation and Law Digest, I, 3, 1908, Vellore.

with, to get back his cattle. There is then the nefarious system of tuppu-kuli offering itself, and he freely resorts to it, and succeeds in getting back his lost cattle sooner or later. On the other hand, if a complaint is made to the Village Magistrate or Police, recovery by this channel is impossible. The tuppu-kuli agents have their spies or informants everywhere, dogging the footsteps of the owner of the stolen cattle, and of those who are likely to help him in recovering it. As soon as they know the case is recorded in the Police station, they determine not to let the animal go back to its owner at any risk, unless some mutual friend intervenes, and works mightily for the recovery, in which case the restoration is generally through the pound. Such a restoration is, *primâ facie*, cattle-straying, for only stray cattle are taken to the pound. This, too, is done after a good deal of hard swearing on both sides not to hand over the offender to the authorities."

In connection with the 'vellari thadi' referred to above, Dr. Oppert writes * that "boomerangs are used by the Tamil Maravans and Kallans when hunting deer. The Madras Museum collection contains three (two ivory, one wooden) from the Tanjore armoury. In the arsenal of the Pudukkōttai Rāja a stock of wooden boomerangs is always kept. Their name in Tamil is valai tadi (bent stick)." Concerning these boomerangs, the Dewān of Pudukkōttai writes to me as follows. "The valari or valai tadi is a short weapon, generally made of some hard-grained wood. It is also sometimes made of iron. It is crescent-shaped, one end being heavier than the other, and the outer edge is sharpened. Men trained in the use of the weapon hold it by the lighter end, whirl

* Madras Journ. Lit. Science, XXV.

it a few times over their shoulders to give it impetus, and then hurl it with great force against the object aimed at. It is said that there were experts in the art of throwing the valari, who could at one stroke despatch small game, and even man. No such experts are now forthcoming in the State, though the instrument is reported to be occasionally used in hunting hares, jungle fowl, etc. Its days, however, must be counted as past. Tradition states that the instrument played a considerable part in the Poligar wars of the last century. But it now reposes peacefully in the households of the descendants of the rude Kallan and Maravan warriors, who plied it with such deadly effect in the last century, preserved as a sacred relic of a chivalric past along with other old family weapons in their pūja room, brought out and scraped and cleaned on occasions like the Ayudha pūja day (when worship is paid to weapons and implements of industry), and restored to its place of rest immediately afterwards."

The sub-divisions of the Kallans, which were returned in greatest numbers at the census, 1891, were Īsanganādu (or Visangu-nādu), Kungiliyan, Mēnādu, Nāttu, Piramalainādu, and Sīrukudi. In the Census Report, 1901, it is recorded that "in Madura the Kallans are divided into ten main endogamous divisions * which are territorial in origin. These are (1) Mēl-nādu, (2) Sīrukudi-nādu, (3) Vellūr-nādu, (4) Malla-kōttai nādu, (5) Pākanēri, (6) Kandramānikkam or Kunnan-kōttai nādu, (7) Kandadēvi, (8) Puramalai-nādu, (9) Tennilai-nādu, and (10) Pālaya-nādu. The headman of the Puramalai-nādu section is said to be installed by Idaiyans (herdsmen), but what the connection between the two castes may be

* I am informed that only Mēl-nādu, Sīrukudi, Mella-kōttai, and Puramalai are endogamous.

is not clear. The termination nādu means a country. These sections are further divided into exogamous sections called vaguppus. The Mēl-nādu Kallans have three sections called terus or streets, namely, Vadakku-teru (north street), Kilakku-teru (east street), and Tērku-teru (south street). The Sīrukudi Kallans have vaguppus named after the gods specially worshipped by each, such as Āndi, Mandai, Aiyanar, and Vīramāngāli. Among the Vellūr-nādu Kallans the names of these sections seem merely fanciful. Some of them are Vēngai puli (cruel-handed tiger), Vekkāli puli (cruel-legged tiger), Sāmi puli (holy tiger), Sem puli (red tiger), Sammatti makkal (hammer men), Tirumān (holy deer), and Sāyumpadai tāngi (supporter of the vanquished army). A section of the Tanjore Kallans names its sections from sundry high-sounding titles meaning King of the Pallavas, King of Tanjore, conqueror of the south, mighty ruler, and so on."

Portions of the Madura and Tanjore districts are divided into areas known as nādus, a name which, as observed by Mr. Nelson, is specially applicable to Kallan tracts. In each nādu a certain caste, called the Nāttan, is the predominant factor in the settlement of social questions which arise among the various castes living within the nādu. Round about Devakotta in the Sivaganga zamindari there are fourteen nādus, representatives of which meet once a year at Kandadēvi, to arrange for the annual festival at the temple dedicated to Swarnamurthi Swāmi. The four nādus Unjanai, Sembonmari, Iravaseri, and Tennilai in the same zamindari constitute a group, of which the last is considered the chief nādu, whereat caste questions must come up for settlement. For marriage purposes these four nādus constitute an endogamous section, which is sub-divided

into septs or karais. Among the Vallambans these karais are exogamous, and run in the male line. But, among the Kallans, the karai is recognised only in connection with property. A certain tract of land is the property of a particular karai, and the legal owners thereof are members of the same karai. When the land has to be disposed of, this can only be effected with the consent of representatives of the karai. The Nāttar Kallans of Sivaganga have exogamous septs called kīlai or branches, which, as among the Maravans, run in the female line, *i.e.*, a child belongs to the mother's, not the father's, sept. In some castes, and even among Brāhmans, though contrary to strict rule, it is permissible for a man to marry his sister's daughter. This is not possible among the Kallans who have kīlais such as those referred to, because the maternal uncle of a girl, the girl, and her mother all belong to the same sept. But the children of a brother and sister may marry, because they belong to different kīlais, *i.e.*, those of their respective mothers.

Subban (Kurivili kīlai). = Pachchai (Arasiya kīlai).

Karuppan, son (Arasiya kīlai) — Ellamma, daughter (Arasiya kīlai)

Rāman (Pesadan kīlai) — Mināchi (Arasiya kīlai)

In the above example, the girl Mināchi may not marry Karuppan, as both are members of the same kīlai. But she ought, though he be a mere boy, to marry Rāman, who belongs to a different sept.

It is noted* that, among the Sivaganga Kallans, "when a member of a certain kīlai dies, a piece of new cloth should be given to the other male member of the same kīlai by the heir of the deceased. The cloth thus obtained should be given to the sister of the person obtaining it. If her brother fails to do so, her husband will consider himself degraded, and consequently will divorce her." Round about Pudukkōttai and Tanjore, the Visangu-nādu Kallans have exogamous septs called pattapēru, and they adopt the sept name as a title, *e.g.*, Muthu Udaiyān, Karuppa Tondaman, etc. It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district, that the sub-divisions of the Kallans are split into groups, *e.g.*, Onaiyan (wolfish), Singattān (lion-like), etc.

It is a curious fact that the Puramalai-nādu Kallans practice the rite of circumcision. The origin of this custom is uncertain, but it has been suggested † that it is a survival of a forcible conversion to Muhammadanism of a section of the Kurumbas who fled northwards on the downfall of their kingdom. At the time appointed for the initiatory ceremony, the Kallan youth is carried on the shoulders of his maternal uncle to a grove or plain outside the village, where betel is distributed among those who have assembled, and the operation is performed by a barber-surgeon. *En route* to the selected site, and throughout the ceremony, the conch shell (musical instrument) is blown. The youth is presented with new cloths. It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that "every Kallan boy has a right to claim the hand of his paternal aunt's daughter in marriage. This aunt bears the expenses connected with his circumcision. Similarly, the maternal uncle pays the costs of the rites which are

* Madras Census Report, 1891. † Manual of the Madura district.

observed when a girl attains maturity, for he has a claim on the girl as a bride for his son. The two ceremonies are performed at one time for large batches of boys and girls. On an auspicious day, the young people are all feasted, and dressed in their best, and repair to a river or tank (pond). The mothers of the girls make lamps of plantain leaves, and float them on the water, and the boys are operated on by the local barber." It is stated, in the Census Report, 1901, that the Sīrukudi Kallans use a tāli, on which the Muhammadan badge of a crescent and star is engraved.

In connection with marriage among the Kallans, it is noted by Mr. S. M. Natesa Sastri * that "at the Māttupongal feast, towards evening, festoons of aloe fibre and cloths containing coins are tied to the horns of bullocks and cows, and the animals are driven through the streets with tom-tom and music. In the villages, especially those inhabited by the Kallans in Madura and Tinnevelly, the maiden chooses as her husband him who has safely untied and brought to her the cloth tied to the horn of the fiercest bull. The animals are let loose with their horns containing valuables, amidst the din of tom-tom and harsh music, which terrifies and bewilders them. They run madly about, and are purposely excited by the crowd. A young Kalla will declare that he will run after such and such a bull—and this is sometimes a risky pursuit—and recover the valuables tied to its horn. The Kallan considers it a great disgrace to be injured while chasing the bull."

A poet of the early years of the present era, quoted by Mr. Kanakasabhai Pillai,† describes this custom as practiced by the shepherd castes in those days. "A

* Hindu Feasts, Fasts, and Ceremonies, 1903.

† The Tamils eighteen hundred years ago, 1904.

large area of ground is enclosed with palisades and strong fences. Into the enclosure are brought ferocious bulls with sharpened horns. On a spacious loft, overlooking the enclosure, stand the shepherd girls, whom they intend to give away in marriage. The shepherd youths, prepared for the fight, first pray to their gods, whose images are placed under old banian or peepul trees, or at watering places. They then deck themselves with garlands made of the bright red flowers of the kānthal, and the purple flowers of the kāya. At a signal given by the beating of drums, the youths leap into the enclosure, and try to seize the bulls, which, frightened by the noise of the drums, are now ready to charge anyone who approaches them. Each youth approaches a bull, which he chooses to capture. But the bulls rush furiously, with tails raised, heads bent down, and horns levelled at their assailants. Some of the youths face the bulls boldly, and seize their horns. Some jump aside, and take hold of their tails. The more wary young men cling to the animals till they force them to fall on the ground. Many a luckless youth is now thrown down. Some escape without a scratch, while others are trampled upon or gored by the bulls. Some, though wounded and bleeding, again spring on the bulls. A few, who succeed in capturing the animals, are declared the victors of that day's fight. The elders then announce that the bull-fight is over. The wounded are carried out of the enclosure, and attended to immediately, while the victors and the brides-elect repair to an adjoining grove, and there, forming into groups, dance joyously before preparing for their marriage."

In an account of marriage among the Kallans, Mr. Nelson writes that "the most proper alliance in the opinion of a Kallan is one between a man and the

daughter of his father's sister, and, if an individual have such a cousin, he must marry her, whatever disparity there may be between their respective ages. A boy of fifteen must marry such a cousin, even if she be thirty or forty years old, if her father insists upon his so doing. Failing a cousin of this sort, he must marry his aunt or his niece, or any near relative. If his father's brother has a daughter, and insists upon him marrying her he cannot refuse; and this whatever may be the woman's age. One of the customs of the western Kallans is specially curious. It constantly happens that a woman is the wife of ten, eight, six, or two husbands, who are held to be the fathers jointly and severally of any children that may be born of her body, and, still more curiously, when the children grow up they, for some unknown reason, invariably style themselves the children not of ten, eight or six fathers as the case may be, but of eight and two, six and two, or four and two fathers. When a wedding takes place, the sister of the bridegroom goes to the house of the parents of the bride, and presents them with twenty-one Kāli fanams (coins) and a cloth, and, at the same time, ties some horse-hair round the bride's neck. She then brings her and her relatives to the house of the bridegroom, where a feast is prepared.

Sheep are killed, and stores of liquor kept ready, and all partake of the good cheer provided. After this the bride and bridegroom are conducted to the house of the latter, and the ceremony of an exchange between them of vallari thadis or boomerangs is solemnly performed. Another feast is then given in the bride's house, and the bride is presented by her parents with one markāl of rice and a hen. She then goes with her husband to his house. During the first twelve months after marriage, it is customary for the wife's parents to

invite the pair to stay with them a day or two on the occasion of any feast, and to present them on their departure with a markāl of rice and a cock. At the time of the first Pongal feast after the marriage, the presents customarily given to the son-in-law are five markāls of rice, five loads of pots and pans, five bunches of plantains, five cocoanuts, and five lumps of jaggery (crude sugar). A divorce is easily obtained on either side. A husband dissatisfied with his wife can send her away if he be willing at the same time to give her half of his property, and a wife can leave her husband at will upon forfeiture of forty-two Kāli fanams. A widow may marry any man she fancies, if she can induce him to make her a present of ten fanams."

In connection with the foregoing account, I am informed that, among the Nāttar Kallans, the brother of a married woman must give her annually at Pongal a present of rice, a goat, and a cloth until her death. The custom of exchanging boomerangs appears to be fast becoming a tradition. But, there is a common saying still current " Send the valari tadi, and bring the bride." As regards the horse-hair, which is mentioned as being tied round the bride's neck, I gather that, as a rule, the tāli is suspended from a cotton thread, and the horse-hair necklet may be worn by girls prior to puberty and marriage, and by widows. This form of necklet is also worn by females of other castes, such as Maravans, Valaiyans, and Morasa Paraiyans. Puramalai Kallan women can be distinguished by the triangular ornament, which is attached to the tāli string. It is stated, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that " when a girl has attained maturity, she puts away the necklace of coloured beads she wore as a child, and dons the horse-hair necklet, which is characteristic of the Kallan woman. This

she retains till death, even if she becomes a widow. The richer Kallans substitute for the horse-hair a necklace of many strands of fine silver wire. In Tirumangalam, the women often hang round their necks a most curious brass and silver pendant, six or eight inches long, and elaborately worked."

It is noted in the Census Report, 1891, that as a token of divorce "a Kallan gives his wife a piece of straw in the presence of his caste people. In Tamil the expression 'to give a straw' means to divorce, and 'to take a straw' means to accept divorce."

In their marriage customs, some Kallans have adopted the Purānic form of rite owing to the influence of Brāhman purōhits, and, though adult marriage is the rule, some Brāhmanised Kallans have introduced infant marriage. To this the Puramalai section has a strong objection, as, from the time of marriage, they have to give annually till the birth of the first child a present of fowls, rice, a goat, jaggery, plantains, betel, turmeric, and condiments. By adult marriage the time during which this present has to be made is shortened, and less expenditure thereon is incurred. In connection with the marriage ceremonies as carried out by some Kallans, I gather that the consent of the maternal uncle of a girl to her marriage is essential. For the betrothal ceremony, the father and maternal uncle of the future bridegroom proceed to the girl's house, where a feast is held, and the date fixed for the wedding written on two rolls of palm leaf dyed with turmeric or red paper, which are exchanged between the maternal uncles. On the wedding day, the sister of the bridegroom goes to the house of the bride, accompanied by women, some of whom carry flowers, cocoanuts, betel leaves, turmeric, leafy twigs of *Sesbania grandiflora*,

paddy (unhusked rice), milk, and ghī (clarified butter). A basket containing a female cloth, and the tāli string wrapped up in a red cloth borrowed from a washerman, is given to a sister of the bridegroom or to a woman belonging to his sept. On the way to the bride's house, two of the women blow chank shells (musical instrument). The bride's people question the bridegroom's party as to his sept, and they ought to say that he belongs to Indra kūlam, Thalavala nādu, and Ahalya gōtra. The bridegroom's sister, taking up the tāli, passes it round to be touched by all present, and ties the string, which is decorated with flowers, tightly round the bride's neck amid the blowing of the conch shell. The bride is then conducted to the home of the bridegroom, whence they return to her house on the following day. The newly married couple sit on a plank, and coloured rice-balls or coloured water are waved, while women yell out "killa, illa, illa ; killa, illa, illa." This ceremony is called kulavi idal, and is sometimes performed by Kallan women during the tāli-tying.

The following details relating to the marriage ceremonies are recorded in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district. "The arrival of the bridegroom has been described as being sometimes especially ceremonious. Mounted on a horse, and attended by his maternal uncle, he is met by a youth from the bride's house, also mounted, who conducts the visitors to the marriage booth. Here he is given betel leaves, areca nuts, and a rupee by the bride's father, and his feet are washed in milk and water, and adorned with toe-rings by the bride's mother. The tāli is suspended from a necklet of gold or silver instead of cotton thread, but this is afterwards changed to cotton for fear of offending the god Karuppan. A lamp is often held by the bridegroom's sister, or some



KALLAN CHILDREN WITH DILATED EAR-LOBES.

married woman, while the tāli is being tied. This is left unlighted by the Kallans for fear it should go out, and thus cause an evil omen. The marriage tie is in some localities very loose. Even a woman who has borne her husband many children may leave him if she likes, to seek a second husband, on condition that she pays him her marriage expenses. In this case (as also when widows are remarried), the children are left in the late husband's house. The freedom of the Kallan women in these matters is noticed in the proverb that, "though there may be no thread in the spinning-rod, there will always be a (tāli) thread on the neck of a Kallan woman," or that "though other threads fail, the thread of a Kallan woman will never do so."

By some Kallans pollution is, on the occasion of the first menstrual period, observed for seven or nine days. On the sixteenth day, the maternal uncle of the girl brings a sheep or goat, and rice. She is bathed and decorated, and sits on a plank while a vessel of water, coloured rice, and a measure filled with paddy with a style bearing a betel leaf struck on it, are waved before her. Her head, knees, and shoulders are touched with cakes, which are then thrown away. A woman, conducting the girl round the plank, pours water from a vessel on to a betel leaf held in her hand, so that it falls on the ground at the four cardinal points of the compass, which the girl salutes.

A ceremony is generally celebrated in the seventh month of pregnancy, for which the husband's sister prepares pongal (cooked rice). The pregnant woman sits on a plank, and the rice is waved before her. She then stands up, and bends down while her sister-in-law pours milk from a betel or pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) leaf on her back. A feast brings the ceremony to a close. Among

the Vellūr-nādu Kallans patterns are said * to be drawn on the back of the pregnant woman with rice-flour, and milk is poured over them. The husband's sister decorates a grindstone in the same way, invokes a blessing on the woman, and expresses a hope that she may have a male child as strong as a stone.

When a child is born in a family, the entire family observes pollution for thirty days, during which entrance into a temple is forbidden. Among the Nāttar Kallans, children are said to be named at any time after they are a month old. But, among the Puramalai Kallans, a first-born female child is named on the seventh day, after the ear-boring ceremony has been performed. "All Kallans," Mr. Francis writes,* "put on sacred ashes, the usual mark of a Saivite, on festive occasions, but they are nevertheless generally Vaishnavites. The dead are usually buried, and it is said that, at funerals, cheroots are handed round, which those present smoke while the ceremony proceeds." Some Kallans are said,† when a death occurs in a family, to put a pot filled with dung or water, a broomstick, and a fire-brand at some place where three roads meet, or in front of the house, in order to prevent the ghost from returning.

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that "the Kilnād Kallans usually bury their dead. Lamps are periodically lighted on the tomb, and it is whitewashed annually. The Piramalainād division usually burn the dead. If a woman dies when with child, the baby is taken out, and placed alongside her on the pyre. This, it may be noted, is the rule with most castes in this district, and, in some communities, the relations afterwards put up a stone burden-rest by the side of a

* Madras Census Report, 1901. † Gazetteer of the Tanjore district.

road, the idea being that the woman died with her burden, and so her spirit rejoices to see others lightened of theirs. Tradition says that the caste came originally from the north. The dead are buried with their faces laid in that direction; and, when pūja is done to Karuppanaswâmi, the caste god, the worshippers turn to the north."

According to Mr. H. A. Stuart * "the Kallans are nominally Saivites, but in reality the essence of their religious belief is devil-worship. Their chief deity is Alagarswâmi, the god of the great Alagar Kōvil twelve miles to the north of the town of Madura. To this temple they make large offerings, and the Swâmi, called Kalla Alagar, has always been regarded as their own peculiar deity." The Kallans are said by Mr. Mullaly to observe omens, and consult their household gods before starting on depredations. "Two flowers, the one red and the other white, are placed before the idol, a symbol of their god Kalla Alagar. The white flower is the emblem of success. A child of tender years is told to pluck a petal of one of the two flowers, and the undertaking rests upon the choice made by the child." In like manner, when a marriage is contemplated among the Idaiyans, the parents of the prospective bride and bridegroom go to the temple, and throw before the idol a red and white flower, each wrapped in a betel leaf. A small child is then told to pick up one of the leaves. If the one selected contains the white flower, it is considered auspicious, and the marriage will take place.

In connection with the Alagar Kōvil, I gather † that, when oaths are to be taken, the person who is to swear is asked to worship Kallar Alagar, and, with

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

† Madras Mail, 1908.

a parivattam (cloth worn as a mark of respect in the presence of the god) on his head, and a garland round his neck, should stand on the eighteenth step of the eighteen steps of Karuppanaswāmi, and say: "I swear before Kallar Alagar and Karuppannaswāmi that I have acted rightly, and so on. If the person swears falsely, he dies on the third day; if truly the other person meets with the same fate."

It was noted by Mr. M. J. Walhouse,* that "at the bull games (jellikattu) at Dindigul, the Kallans can alone officiate as priests, and consult the presiding deity. On this occasion they hold quite a Saturnalia of lordship and arrogance over the Brāhmans." It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that "the keenness of the more virile sections of the community (especially the Kallans), in this game, is extraordinary, and, in many villages, cattle are bred and reared specially for it. The best jallikats are to be seen in the Kallan country in Tirumangalam, and next come those in Mēlūr and Madura tāluks." (*See* also Maravan.)

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that Karuppan is "essentially the god of the Kallans, especially of the Kallans of the Mēlūr side. In those parts, his shrine is usually the Kallans' chāvadi (assembly place). His priests are usually Kallans or Kusavans. Alagarswāmi (the beautiful god) is held in special veneration by the Kallans, and is often popularly called the Kallar Alagar. The men of this caste have the right to drag his car at the car festival, and, when he goes (from Alagar Kōvil) on his visit to Madura, he is dressed as a Kallan, exhibits the long ears characteristic of that caste, and carries the boomerang and club, which

* Ind. Ant., III., 1874.

were of their old favourite weapons. It is whispered that Kallan dacoits invoke his aid when they are setting out on marauding expeditions, and, if they are successful therein, put part of their ill-gotten gains into the offertory (undial) box, which is kept at his shrine."

For the following note I am indebted to the Rev. J. Sharrock. "The chief temple of the Kallans is about ten miles west of Madura, and is dedicated to Alagarswāmi, said to be an incarnation of Vishnu, but also said to be the brother of Mīnātchi (the fish-eyed or beautiful daughter of the Pāndya king of Madura). Now Mīnātchi has been married by the Brāhmans to Siva, and so we see Hinduism wedded to Dravidianism, and the spirit of compromise, the chief method of conversion adopted by the Brāhmans, carried to its utmost limit. At the great annual festival, the idol of Alagarswāmi is carried, in the month of Chittra (April-May), to the temple of Mīnātchi, and the banks of the river Vaiga swarm with two to three lakhs * of worshippers, a large proportion of whom are Kallans. At this festival, the Kallans have the right of dragging with a rope the car of Alagarswāmi, though other people may join in later on. As Alagarswāmi is a vegetarian, no blood sacrifice is offered to him. This is probably due to the influence of Brāhmanism, for, in their ordinary ceremonies, the Kallans invariably slaughter sheep as sacrifices to propitiate their deities. True to their bold and thievish instincts, the Kallans do not hesitate to steal a god, if they think he will be of use to them in their predatory excursions,† and are not afraid to dig up the coins or jewels that are generally buried under an idol. Though they entertain little dread of their

* A lakh = a hundred thousand.

† Compare the theft of Laban's teraphim by Rachel. Genesis, XXXI, 19.

own village gods, they are often afraid of others that they meet far from home, or in the jungles when they are engaged in one of their stealing expeditions. As regards their own village gods, there is a sort of understanding that, if they help them in their thefts, they are to have a fair share of the spoil, and, on the principle of honesty among thieves, the bargain is always kept. At the annual festival for the village deities, each family sacrifices a sheep, and the head of the victim is given to the pūjāri (priest), while the body is taken home by the donor, and partaken of as a communion feast. Two at least of the elements of totem worship appear here: there is the shedding of the sacrificial blood of an innocent victim to appease the wrath of the totem god, and the common feasting together which follows it. The Brāhmans sometimes join in these sacrifices, but of course take no part of the victim, the whole being the perquisite of the pūjāri, and there is no common participation in the meal. When strange deities are met with by the Kallans on their thieving expeditions, it is usual to make a vow that, if the adventure turns out well, part of the spoil shall next day be left at the shrine of the god, or be handed over to the pūjāri of that particular deity. They are afraid that, if this precaution be not taken, the god may make them blind, or cause them to be discovered, or may go so far as to knock them down, and leave them to bleed to death. If they have seen the deity, or been particularly frightened or otherwise specially affected by these unknown gods, instead of leaving a part of the body, they adopt a more thorough method of satisfying the same. After a few days they return at midnight to make a special sacrifice, which of course is conducted by the particular pūjāri, whose god is to be appeased. They bring a sheep with rice,

curry-stuffs and liquors, and, after the sacrifice, give a considerable share of these dainties, together with the animal's head, to the pūjāri, as well as a sum of money for making the pūja (worship) for them. Some of the ceremonies are worth recording. First the idol is washed in water, and a sandal spot is put on the forehead in the case of male deities, and a kunkuma spot in the case of females. Garlands are placed round the neck, and the bell is rung, while lamps are lighted all about. Then the deity's name is repeatedly invoked, accompanied by beating on the udukku. This is a small drum which tapers to a narrow waist in the middle, and is held in the left hand of the pūjāri with one end close to his left ear, while he taps on it with the fingers of his right hand. Not only is this primitive music pleasing to the ears of his barbarous audience, but, what is more important, it conveys the oracular communications of the god himself. By means of the end of the drum placed close to his ear, the pūjāri is enabled to hear what the god has to say of the predatory excursion which has taken place, and the pūjāri (who, like a clever gypsy, has taken care previously to get as much information of what has happened as possible) retails all that has occurred during the exploit to his wondering devotees. In case his information is incomplete, he is easily able to find out, by a few leading questions and a little cross-examination of these ignorant people, all that he needs to impress them with the idea that the god knows all about their transactions, having been present at their plundering bout. At all such sacrifices, it is a common custom to pour a little water over the sheep, to see if it will shake itself, this being invariably a sign of the deity's acceptance of the animal offered. In some sacrifices, if the sheep does not shake

itself, it is rejected, and another substituted for it; and, in some cases (be it whispered, when the pūjāri thinks the sheep too thin and scraggy), he pours over it only a little water, and so demands another animal. If, however, the pūjāri, as the god's representative, is satisfied, he goes on pouring more and more water till the half-drenched animal has to shake itself, and so signs its own death-warrant. All who have ventured forth in the night to take part in the sacrifice then join together in the communal meal. An illustration of the value of sacrifices may here be quoted, to show how little value may be attached to an oath made in the presence of a god. Some pannaikārans (servants) of a Kallan land-owner one day stole a sheep, for which they were brought up before the village munsif. When they denied the theft, the munsif took them to their village god, Karuppan (the black brother), and made them swear in its presence. They perjured themselves again, and were let off. Their master quietly questioned them afterwards, asking them how they dared swear so falsely before their own god, and to this they replied 'While we were swearing, we were mentally offering a sacrifice to him of a sheep' (which they subsequently carried out), to pacify him for the double crime of stealing and perjury."

As a typical example of devil worship, the practice of the Valaiyans and Kallans of Orattanādu in the Tanjore district is described by Mr. F. R. Hemingway.* "Valaiyan houses have generally an odiyan (*Odina Wodier*) tree in the backyard, wherein the devils are believed to live, and among Kallans every street has a tree for their accommodation. They are propitiated

* Gazetteer of the Tanjore district.

at least once a year, the more virulent under the tree itself, and the rest in the house, generally on a Friday or Monday. Kallans attach importance to Friday in Ādi (July and August), the cattle Pongal day in Tai (January and February), and Kartigai day in the month Kartigai (November and December). A man, with his mouth covered with a cloth to indicate silence and purity, cooks rice in the backyard, and pours it out in front of the tree, mixed with milk and jaggery (crude sugar). Cocoanuts and toddy are also placed there. These are offered to the devils, represented in the form of bricks or mud images placed at the foot of the tree, and camphor is set alight. A sheep is then brought and slaughtered, and the devils are supposed to spring one after another from the tree into one of the bystanders. This man then becomes filled with the divine afflatus, works himself up into a kind of frenzy, becomes the mouthpiece of the spirits, pronounces their satisfaction or the reverse at the offerings, and gives utterance to cryptic phrases, which are held to foretell good or evil fortune to those in answer to whom they are made. When all the devils in turn have spoken and vanished, the man recovers his senses. The devils are worshipped in the same way in the houses, except that no blood is shed. All alike are propitiated by animal sacrifices."

The Kallans are stated by Mr. Hemingway to be very fond of bull-baiting. This is of two kinds. The first resembles the game played by other castes, except that the Kallans train their animals for the sport, and have regular meetings, at which all the villagers congregate. These begin at Pongal, and go on till the end of May. The sport is called tolu mādu (byre bull). The best animals for it are the Pulikkolam bulls from the

Madura district. The other game is called pāchal mādu (leaping bull). In this, the animals are tethered to a long rope, and the object of the competition is to throw the animal, and keep it down. A bull which is good at the game, and difficult to throw, fetches a very high price.

It is noted in the Gazetteer of the Tanjore district, that "the Kallans have village caste panchayats (councils) of the usual kind, but in some places they are discontinuing these in imitation of the Vellālans. According to the account given at Orattanādu, the members of Ambalakāran families sit by hereditary right as Kāryastans or advisers to the headman in each village. One of these households is considered superior to the others, and one of its members is the headman (Ambalakāran) proper. The headmen of the panchayats of villages which adjoin meet to form a further panchayat to decide on matters common to them generally. In Kallan villages, the Kallan headman often decides disputes between members of other lower castes, and inflicts fines on the party at fault."

In the Gazetteer, of the Madura district, it is recorded that "the organization of the Kilnād Kallans differs from that of their brethren beyond the hills. Among the former, an hereditary headman, called the Ambalakāran, rules in almost every village. He receives small fees at domestic ceremonies, is entitled to the first betel and nut, and settles caste disputes. Fines inflicted are credited to the caste fund. The western Kallans are under a more monarchial rule, an hereditary headman called Tirumala Pinnai Tēvan deciding most caste matters. He is said to get this hereditary name from the fact that his ancestor was appointed (with three co-adjutors) by King Tirumala Nāyakkan, and given

many insignia of office including a state palanquin. If any one declines to abide by his decision, excommunication is pronounced by the ceremony of 'placing the thorn,' which consists in laying a thorny branch across the threshold of the recalcitrant party's house, to signify that, for his contumacy, his property will go to ruin and be overrun with jungle. The removal of the thorn, and the restitution of the sinner to Kallan society can only be procured by abject apologies to Pinnai Tēvan."

The usual title of the Kallans is Ambalakāran (president of an assembly), but some, like the Maravans and Agamudaiyans, style themselves Tēvan (god) or Sērvaikkāran (commander).*

Kallankanadōru (stone).—A sub-division of Kōmati, said to be descended from those who sat on the stone (kallu) mantapa outside the Penukonda Kanyakamma temple, when the question whether to enter the fire-pits or not was being discussed by the caste elders.

Kallan Mūppan.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, Kallan Mūppan is returned as "a sub-caste of the Malabar Kammālans, the members of which are stone-workers." A correspondent writes to me that, "while the Kammālans are a polluting and polyandrous class, the Kallan Mūppans are allowed to enter the outside enclosure of temples. They do not remarry their widows, and are strictly monogamous. Their purōhits are Tamil barbers, who officiate at their marriages. The barber shaves the bridegroom before the wedding ceremony. The purōhit has also to blow the conch-shell all the way from the bridegroom's house to that of the bride."

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

The names Kallan and Kalkōtti are also those by which the Malabar stone-masons are known.

Kallangi.—Kallangi and Kallavēli (Kallan's fence) are fanciful names, returned by Pallis at times of census.

Kallasāri (stone-workers).—The occupational name of a sub-division of Malayālam Kammālans.

Kallātakurup.—A sub-division of Ambalavāsis, who sing in Bhagavati temples. They play on a stringed instrument, called nandurini, with two strings and a number of wooden stops glued on to the long handle, and a wooden plectrum.

Kallu (stone).—A sub-division of Gāniga and Oddē. Kallukoti (stone-mason) is a sub-division of Malabar Kammālans, who work in stone.

Kallukatti.—It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the South Canara district, that "a grinding stone made of granite is an article peculiar to South Canara. It is a semicircular, oval-shaped block with a flat bottom, and a round hole in the middle of the surface. It has another oval-shaped block, thin and long, with one end so shaped as to fit into the hole in the larger block. These two together make what is known as the grinding-stone of the district, which is used for grinding curry-stuff, rice, wheat, etc. Mill-stones for pounding grain are also made of granite. Formerly, a class of people called Kallukattis used to make such articles, but the industry is now taken up by other castes as well. Mile-stones, slabs for temple door-frames, idols and other figures for temple purposes are also made of granite."

Kallūr.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a name for the Pulikkappanikkan sub-division of Nāyar.

Kallūri (stone village).—An exogamous sept of Mēdara.

Kal Tacchan (stone-mason).—A sub-division of Kammālan.

Kalti (expunged).—A degraded Paraiyan is known as a Kalti. Amongst the Paraiyans of Madras, Chingleput and North Arcot, the rule is that a man who does not abide by the customs of the caste is formally excommunicated by a caste council. He then joins "those at Vinnamangalam" near Vellore, *i.e.*, those who have, like himself, been driven out of the caste.

Kalugunādu (eagle's country).—An exogamous sept of Tamil goldsmiths in the Madura district.

Kaluthai (possessors of donkeys).—A sub-division of Oddē.

Kalyānakulam (marriage people).—A fanciful name returned by some Mangalas at times of census, as they officiate as musicians at marriages.

Kamadi (tortoise).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kāmākshiamma.—Recorded, in the North Arcot Manual, as a sub-division of Vāniyan. Kāmākshiamma is the chief goddess worshipped at Conjeeveram. She and Mīnākshi Amma of Madura are two well-known goddesses worshipped by Saivites. Both names are synonyms of Parvati, the wife of Siva.

Kāmāti (foolish).—A name sometimes applied to carpenters, and also of a sub-division of Okkiliyans, who are said to have abandoned their original occupation of cultivating land, and become bricklayers.

Kambalam.—The name Kambalam is applied to a group of nine castes (Tottiyan, Annappan, Kāppiliyan, Chakkiliyan, etc.), because at their council meetings a blanket (kambli) is spread, on which is placed a brass vessel (kalasam) filled with water, and decorated with flowers. (*See* Tottiyan.)

Kambalattān.—A synonym of Tottiyan.

Kamban.—A title of the Ōcchans, to which caste the great Tamil epic poet Kamban is reputed to have belonged.

Kambha.—Kambha or Kambhāpu, meaning a pillar or post, has been recorded as an exogamous sept of Mādiga and Kōmati.

Kamma.—Writing collectively concerning the Kammas, Kāpus or Reddis, Velamas, and Telagas, Mr. W. Francis states * that "all four of these large castes closely resemble one another in appearance and customs, and seem to have branched off from one and the same Dravidian stock. Originally soldiers by profession, they are now mainly agriculturists and traders, and some of them in the north are zamindars (land-owners). The Rāzus, who now claim to be Kshatriyas, were probably descended from Kāpus, Kammas, and Velamas. The Kammas and Kāpus of the Madura and Tinnevelly districts seem to have followed the Vijayanagar army south, and settled in these districts when the Nāyak Governors were established there. Their women are less strict in their deportment than those of the same castes further north, the latter of whom are very careful of their reputations, and, in the case of one section of the Kammas, are actually gōsha (kept in seclusion) like Musalmānis."

Various stories are current, which point to the common ancestry of the Kammas, Kāpus, and Velamas. The word Kamma in Telugu means the ear-ornament, such as is worn by women. According to one legend "the Rishis, being troubled by Rākshasas, applied to Vishnu for protection, and he referred them to Lakshmi. The goddess gave them a casket containing one of her

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

ear ornaments (kamma), and enjoined them to worship it for a hundred years. At the expiry of that period, a band of five hundred armed warriors sprang up from the casket, who, at the request of the Rishis, attacked and destroyed the giants. After this they were directed to engage in agriculture, being promised extensive estates, and the consideration paid to Kshatriyas. They accordingly became possessed of large territories, such as Amrāvati and others in the Kistna, Nellore and other districts, and have always been most successful agriculturists."*

Some Kammas, when questioned by Mr. F. R. Hemingway in the Godāvari district, stated that they were originally Kshatriyas, but were long ago persecuted by a king of the family of Parikshat, because one of them called him a bastard. They sought refuge with the Kāpus, who took them in, and they adopted the customs of their protectors. According to another legend, a valuable ear ornament, belonging to Rāja Pratāpa Rudra, fell into the hands of an enemy, whom a section of the Kāpus boldly attacked, and recovered the jewel. This feat earned for them and their descendants the title Kamma. Some of the Kāpus ran away, and they are reputed to be the ancestors of the Velamas (veli, away). At the time when the Kammas and Velamas formed a single caste, they observed the Muhammadan gōsha system, whereby the women are kept in seclusion. This was, however, found to be very inconvenient for their agricultural pursuits. They accordingly determined to abandon it, and an agreement was drawn up on a palm-leaf scroll. Those who signed it are said to have become Kammas, and those who declined to do so

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

Velamas, or outsiders. One meaning of the word kamma is the palm-leaf roll, such as is used to produce dilatation of the lobes of the ears. According to another story, there once lived a king, Belthi Reddi by name, who had a large number of wives, the favourite among whom he appointed Rāni. The other wives, being jealous, induced their sons to steal all the jewels of the Rāni, but they were caught in the act by the king, who on the following day asked his wife for her jewels, which she could not produce. Some of the sons ran away, and gave origin to the Velamas; others restored the kamma, and became Kammas. Yet one more story. Pratāpa Rudra's wife lost her ear ornament, and four of the king's captains were sent in search of it. Of these, one restored the jewel, and his descendants became Kammas; the second attacked the thieves, and gave origin to the Velamas; the third ran away, and so his children became the ancestors of the Pakanātis; and the fourth disappeared.

According to the Census Report, 1891, the main subdivisions of the Kammas are Gampa, Illuvellani, Gōdajāti, Kāvali, Vaduga, Pedda, and Bangāru. It would seem that there are two main endogamous sections, Gāmpa (basket) Chātu, and Gōda (wall) Chātu. Chātu is said to mean a screen or hiding place. Concerning the origin of these sections, the following story is told. Two sisters were bathing in a tank (pond), when a king happened to pass by. To hide themselves, one of the girls hid behind a basket, and the other behind a wall. The descendants of the two sisters became the Gampa and Gōda Chātu Kammas, who may not intermarry by reason of their original close relationship. According to another legend, after a desperate battle, some members of the caste escaped by hiding behind baskets, others behind a wall. The terms Illuvellani and Pedda seem to

be synonymous with Gōdachatu. The women of this section were gōsha, and not allowed to appear in public, and even at the present day they do not go out and work freely in the fields. The name Illuvellani indicates those who do not go (vellani) out of the house (illu). The name Pedda (great) refers to the superiority of the section. Vaduga simply means Telugu, and is probably a name given by Tamilians to the Kammas who live amongst them. The name Bangāru is said to refer to the custom of the women of this sub-division wearing only gold nose ornaments (bangāramu). The Gōdajāti sub-division is said to be most numerously represented in North Arcot and Chingleput, the Illuvellani in Kistna, Nellore and Anantapur. The Kāvali sub-division is practically confined to the Godāvari, and the Pedda to the Kistna district. The Vaduga Kammas are found chiefly in Coimbatore.

In his note on the Kammas of the Godāvari district, Mr. Hemingway writes that "in this district they are divided into Kāvitis, Erēdis, Gampas or Gūdas, Uggams, and Rāchas. These names are, according to local accounts, derived from curious household customs, generally from traditional methods of carrying water. Thus, the Kāvitis will not ordinarily carry water except in pots on a kāvidi, the Erēdis except on a pack-bullock, the Uggams except in pots held in the hand, and not on the hip or head, the Rāchas except in a pot carried by two persons. The Gampa women, when they first go to their husbands' houses, take the customary presents in a basket. It is said that these practices are generally observed at the present day."

Writing concerning the Iluvedalani (Illuvellani) Kammas, the editor of the Kurnool Manual (1886) states that "a few families only exist in the district. The

women are kept in strict gōsha. They consider it beneath them to spin thread, or to do other work. A sub-division of this caste lives in Pullalcheruvu, whose families, also gōsha, work at the spindles, like other women of the country. Another class of indoor Kammas resides about Owk. They are apparently descendants of the Kammas, who followed the Naiks from Guntūr to Gandikota in the sixteenth century. They are now reduced, and the females work, like Kāpus, in the field. The Gampas are distinguished from the indoor Kammas by their women wearing the cloth over the right, instead of the left shoulder."

As with other Telugu castes, there are, among the Kammas, a number of exogamous septs or intipēru, of which the following are examples:—

Anumollu, *Dolichos Lablab*.
Tsanda, tax or subscription.
Jasthi, too much.
Mallela, jasmine.
Lanka, island.
Thota kūra, *Amarantus gangeticus*.
Komma, horn, or branch of a tree.
Chēni, dry field.
Palakala, planks.
Kastūri, musk.
Baththāla, rice.
Karnam, accountant.
Irpina, combs.
Gāli, wind.
Dhaniāla, coriander.

The Kammas also have gōtras such as Chittipoola, Kurunollu, Kulakala, Uppāla, Cheruku (sugar-cane), Vallotla, and Yenamalla.

When matters affecting the community have to be decided, a council of the leading members thereof assembles. But, in some places, there is a permanent headman, called Mannemantri or Chaudri.

The Kammas will work as coolies in the fields, but will, on no account, engage themselves as domestic servants. "They are," the Rev. J. Cain writes,* "as a rule a fine well-built class of cultivators, very proud and

* Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

exclusive, and have a great aversion to town life. Many of them never allow their wives to leave their compounds, and it is said that many never do field work on Sundays, but confine themselves on that day to their house-work." "If," a correspondent writes from the Kistna district, "you ask in a village whether so-and-so is a Brāhman, and they say 'No. He is an āsāmi (ordinary man),' he will be a Kamma or Kāpu. If you ask how many pay income-tax in a village, they may tell you two Baniyas (merchants), and two Samsāri-vallu, *i.e.*, two prosperous Kamma ryots."

The Kammas are stated by Mr. H. A. Stuart * to be "most industrious and intelligent cultivators, who, now that gōsha has been generally abandoned, beat all rivals out of the field—a fact which is recognised by several proverbs, such as Kamma vāni chētulu kattīna nilavadu (though you tie a Kamma's hands, he will not be quiet); Kamma vāndlu chērīte kadama jātula vellunu (if Kammas come in, other castes go out); Kamma vāriki bhūmi bhayapadu tunnadi (the earth fears the Kammas), and many others to the same effect. In addition to being industrious and well-to-do they are very proud, an instance of which occurred in the Kistna district, when the Revenue Settlement Officer offered them pattās, in which they were simply called Naidu without the honorific ending gāru. They refused on this account to accept them, and finally the desired alteration was made, as they proved that all of their caste were considered entitled to the distinction. In North Arcot, however, they are not so particular, though some refuse to have their head shaved, because they scruple to bow down before a barber. Besides Vishnu the Kammas worship

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

Ganga, because they say that long ago they fled from Northern India, to avoid the anger of a certain Rāja, who had been refused a bride from among them. They were pursued, but their women, on reaching the Mahānadi, prayed for a passage to Ganga, who opened a dry path for them through the river. Crossing, they all hid themselves in a dholl (*Cajanus indicus*) field, and thus escaped from their pursuers. For this reason, at their marriages, they tie a bunch of dholl leaves to the north-eastern post of the wedding booth, and worship Ganga before tying the tāli."

Among the Kammas of the Tamil country, the bridegroom is said to be sometimes much younger than the bride, and a case is on record of a wife of twenty-two years of age, who used to carry her boy-husband on her hip, as a mother carries her child.* A parallel is to be found in Russia, where not very long ago grown-up women were to be seen carrying about boys of six, to whom they were betrothed.† Widow remarriage is not permitted. Widows of the Gōda chatu section wear white, and those of the Gampa chatu section coloured cloths.

Prior to the betrothal ceremony, female ancestors, Vignēswara, and the Grāma Dēvata (village deities) are worshipped. A near relation of the future bridegroom proceeds, with a party, to the home of the future bride. On their way thither, they look for omens, such as the crossing of birds in an auspicious direction. Immediately on the occurrence of a favourable omen, they burn camphor, and break a cocoanut, which must split in two with clean edges. One half is sent to the would-be bridegroom, and the other taken to the

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

† Hutchinson. Marriage Customs in many lands, 1897.

bride's house. If the first cocoanut does not split properly, others are broken till the wished-for result is obtained. When the girl's house is reached, she demands the sagunam (omen) cocoanut. Her lap is filled with flowers, cocoanuts, turmeric, plantains, betel leaves and areca nuts, combs, sandal paste, and coloured powder (kunkumam). The wedding day is then fixed. Marriage is generally celebrated at the house of the bridegroom, but, if it is a case of kannikadhānam (presenting the girl without claiming the bride's price), at the house of the bride. The bride-price is highest in the Gampa section. On the first day of the marriage rites, the petta mugada sangyam, or box-lid ceremony is performed. The new cloths for the bridal couple, five plantains, nuts, and pieces of turmeric, one or two combs, four rupees, and the bride-price in money or jewels, are placed in a box, which is placed near the parents of the contracting couple. The contents of the box are then laid out on the lid, and examined by the sammandhis (new relations by marriage). The bride's father gives betel leaves and areca nuts to the father of the bridegroom, saying "The girl is yours, and the money mine." The bridegroom's father hands them back, saying "The girl is mine, and the money yours." This is repeated three times. The officiating purōhit (priest) then announces that the man's daughter is to be given in marriage to so-and-so, and the promise is made before the assembled Dēva Brāhmanas, and in the presence of light, Agni, and the Dēvatas. This ceremony is binding, and, should the bridegroom perchance die before the bottu (marriage badge) is tied, she becomes, and remains a widow. The milk-post is next set up, the marriage pots are arranged, and the nalagu ceremony is performed. This consists of the

annointing of the bridal couple with oil, and smearing the shoulders with turmeric flour, or *Acacia Concinna* paste. A barber pares the nails of the bridegroom, and simply touches those of the bride with a mango leaf dipped in milk. In some places this rite is omitted by the Gampa section. A small wooden framework, called dhornam, with cotton threads wound round it, is generally tied to the marriage pandal (booth) by a Tsākali (washerman) not only at a marriage among the Kammas, but also among the Balijas, Kāpus, and Velamas. After the return of the bridal couple from bathing, the bridegroom is decorated, and taken to a specially prepared place within or outside the house, to perform Vīra-gudi-mokkadam, or worship of heroes in their temple. At the spot selected a pandal has been erected, and beneath it three or five bricks, representing the heroes (vīralu), are set up. The bricks are smeared with turmeric paste, and painted with red dots. In front of the bricks an equal number of pots are placed, and they are worshipped by breaking a cocoanut, and burning camphor and incense. The bridegroom then prostrates himself before the bricks, and, taking up a sword, cuts some lime fruits, and touches the pots three times. In former days, a goat or sheep was sacrificed. The hero worship, as performed by the Gōda section, differs from the above rite as practiced by the Gampa section. Instead of erecting a pandal, the Gōdas go to a pīpal (*Ficus religiosa*) tree, near which one or more daggers are placed. A yellow cotton thread is wound three or five times round the tree, which is worshipped. As a substitute for animal sacrifice, lime fruits are cut. The hero worship concluded, the wrist-threads of cotton and wool (kankanam) are tied on the bride and bridegroom, who is taken to the temple after he has bathed and dressed himself in new clothes. On

his return to the booth, the purōhit lights the sacred fire, and the contracting couple sit side by side on a plank. They then stand, with a screen spread between them, and the bridegroom, with his right big toe on that of the bride, ties the bottu round her neck. They then go three times round the dais, with the ends of their cloths knotted together. The bottu of the Gampas is a concave disc of gold, that of the Gōdas a larger flat disc. On the following day, the usual nāgavali, or sacrifice to the Dēvas is offered, and a nāgavali bottu (small gold disc) tied. All the relations make presents to the bridal pair, who indulge in a mock representation of domestic life. On the third day, pongal (rice) is offered to the pots, and the wrist-threads are removed. Like the Palli bridegroom, the Kamma bridegroom performs a mimic ploughing ceremony, but at the house instead of at a tank (pond). He goes to a basket filled with earth, carrying the iron bar of a ploughshare, an ox-goad, and rope, accompanied by the bride carrying in her lap seeds or seedlings. While he pretends to be ploughing, his sister stops him, and will not let him continue till he has promised to give his first-born daughter to her son in marriage. The marriage pots are presented to the sisters of the bridegroom. During the marriage celebration, meat must not be cooked.

Among the Kammas, consummation does not take place till three months after the marriage ceremony, as it is considered unlucky to have three heads of a family in a household during the first year of marriage. By the delay, the birth of a child should take place only in the second year, so that, during the first year, there will be only two heads, husband and wife. In like manner, it is noted by Mr. Francis* that, among the Gangimakkulu

* Gazetteer of the Bellary district.

and Mādigas, the marriage is not consummated till three months after its celebration.

When a pregnant woman is delivered, twigs of *Balanites Roxburghii* are placed round the house.

The dead are usually cremated. As the moment of death approaches, a cocoanut is broken, and camphor burnt. The thumbs and great toes of the corpse are tied together. A woman, who is left a widow, exchanges betel with her dead husband, and the women put rice into his mouth. The corpse is carried to the burning-ground on a bier, with the head towards the house. When it approaches a spot called Arichandra's temple, the bier is placed on the ground, and food is placed at the four corners. Then a Paraiyan or Māla repeats the formula "I am the first born (*i.e.*, the representative of the oldest caste). I wore the sacred thread at the outset. I am Sangu Paraiyan (or Reddi Māla). I was the patron of Arichandra. Lift the corpse, and turn it round with its head towards the smāsanam (burning-ground), and feet towards the house." When the corpse has been laid on the pyre, the relations throw rice over it, and the chief mourner goes three times round the pyre, carrying on his shoulder a pot of water, in which a barber makes holes. During the third turn he lights the pyre, and throwing down the pot, goes off to bathe. On the following day, a stone is placed on the spot where the deceased breathed his last, and his clothes are put close to it. The women pour milk over the stone, and offer milk, cocoanuts, cooked rice, betel, etc., to it. These are taken by the males to the burning-ground. When Arichandra's temple is reached, they place there a small quantity of food on a leaf. At the burning-ground, the fire is extinguished, and the charred bones are collected, and placed on a plantain leaf. Out of the ashes they make an effigy on

the ground, to which food is offered on four leaves, one of which is placed on the abdomen of the figure, and the other three are set by the side of it. The first of these is taken by the Paraiyan, and the others are given to a barber, washerman, and Panisavan (a mendicant caste). The final death ceremonies (karmāndhiram) are performed on the sixteenth day. They commence with the punyāham, or purificatory ceremony, and the giving of presents to Brāhmans. Inside the house, the dead person's clothes are worshipped by the women. The widow is taken to a tank or well, where her nāgavali bottu is removed. This usually wears out in a very short time, so a new one is worn for the purpose of the death ceremony. The males proceed to a tank, and make an effigy on the ground, near which three small stones are set up. On these libations of water are poured, and cooked rice, vegetables, etc., are offered. The chief mourner then goes into the water, carrying the effigy, which is thrown in, and dives as many times as there have been days between the funeral and the karmāndhiram. The ceremony closes with the making of presents to the Brāhmans and agnates. Towards evening, the widow sits on a small quantity of rice on the ground, and her marriage bottu is removed. The Kammas perform a first annual ceremony, but not a regular srādh afterwards.*

As regards their religion, some Kammas are Saivites, others Vaishnavites. Most of the Saivites are disciples of Ārādhya Brāhmans, and the Vaishnavites of Vaishnava Brāhmans or Sātānis. The Gampas reverence Draupadi, Mannarsāmi, Gangamma, Ankamma, and Padavetiamma; the Gōdas Poleramma, Veikandla Thalli (the thousand-eyed goddess) and Padavetiamma.

* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

Kamma (ear ornament).—An exogamous sept of Motāti Kāpu.

Kammālan (Tamil).—The original form of the name Kammālan appears to have been Kannālan or Kannālar, both of which occur in Tamil poems, *e.g.*, Thondamandala Satakam and Er Ezhuvathu, attributed to the celebrated poet Kamban. Kannālan denotes one who rules the eye, or one who gives the eye. When an image is made, its consecration takes place at the temple. Towards the close of the ceremonial, the Kammālan who made it comes forward, and carves out the eyes of the image. The name is said also to refer to those who make articles, and open the eyes of the people, *i.e.*, who make articles pleasing to the eyes.

A very interesting account of the nētra mangalya, or ceremony of painting the eyes of images, as performed by craftsmen in Ceylon, has been published by Mr. A. K. Coomaraswamy.* Therein he writes that "by far the most important ceremony connected with the building and decoration of a vihāra (temple), or with its renovation, was the actual *nētra mangalya* or eye ceremonial. The ceremony had to be performed in the case of any image, whether set up in a vihāra or not. Even in the case of flat paintings it was necessary. D. S. Muhandiram, when making for me a book of drawings of gods according to the Rupāvaliya, left the eyes to be subsequently inserted on a suitable auspicious occasion, with some simpler form of the ceremony described.

"Knox has a reference to the subject as follows. 'Some, being devoutly disposed, will make the image of this god (Buddha) at their own charge. For the making whereof they must bountifully reward the

* Mediæval Sinhalese Art.

Founder. Before the eyes are made, it is not accounted a god, but a lump of ordinary metal, and thrown about the shop with no more regard than anything else. But, when the eyes are to be made, the artificer is to have a good gratification, besides the first agreed upon reward. The eyes being formed, it is thenceforward a god. And then, being brought with honour from the workman's shop, it is dedicated by solemnities and sacrifices, and carried with great state into its shrine or little house, which is before built and prepared for it.'" The pupils of the eyes of a series of clay votive offerings, which were specially made for me, were not painted at the potter's house, but in the verandah of the traveller's bungalow where I was staying.

The Tamil Kammālans are divided into three endogamous territorial groups, Pāndya, Sōzia (or Chōla), and Kongan. The Pāndyas live principally in the Madura and Tinnevelly districts, and the Sōzias in the Trichinopoly, Tanjore, Chingleput, North and South Arcot districts, and Madras. The Kongas are found chiefly in the Salem and Coimbatore districts. In some places, there are still further sub-divisions of territorial origin. Thus, the Pāndya Tattāns are divided into Karakattar, Vambanattar, Pennaikku-akkarayar (those on the other side of the Pennaiyar river), Munnūru-vīttukārar (those of the three hundred families), and so forth. They are further divided into exogamous septs, the names of which are derived from places, *e.g.*, Perugumani, Musiri, Oryanādu, Thiruchendurai, and Kalagunādu.

The Kammālans are made up of five occupational sections, viz., Tattān (goldsmith), Kannān (brass-smith), Tac'chan (carpenter), Kal-Tac'chan (stone-mason), and Kollan or Karumān (blacksmith). The name Pānchāla,

which is sometimes used by the Tamil as well as the Canarese artisan classes, has reference to the fivefold occupations. The various sections intermarry, but the goldsmiths have, especially in towns, ceased to intermarry with the blacksmiths. The Kammālans, claiming, as will be seen later on, to be Brāhmans, have adopted Brāhmanical gōtras, and the five sections have five gōtras called Visvagu, Janagha, Ahima, Janardana, and Ubhēndra, after certain Rishis (sages). Each of these gōtras, it is said, has twenty-five subordinate gōtras attached to it. The names of these, however, are not forthcoming, and indeed, except some individuals who act as priests for the Kammālans, few seem to have any knowledge of them. In their marriages the Kammālans closely imitate the Brāhmanical ceremonial, and the ceremonies last for three or five days according to the means of the parties. The parisam, or bride's money, is paid, as among other non-Brāhmanical castes. Widows are allowed the use of ordinary jewelry and betel, which is not the case among Brāhmans, and they are not compelled to make the usual fasts, or observe the feasts commonly observed by Brāhmans.

The Kammālan caste is highly organised, and its organisation is one of its most interesting features. Each of the five divisions has at its head a Nāttāmaikkāran or headman, and a Kāryasthan, or chief executive officer, under him, who are elected by members of the particular division. Over them is the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran (also known as Ainduvittu Periyathanakkāran or Anjijāti Nāttāmaikkāran), who is elected by lot by representatives chosen from among the five sub-divisions. Each of these chooses ten persons to represent it at the election. These ten again select one of their number, who is the local Nāttāmaikkāran, or one who is likely to



KAMMĀLANS.

become so. The five men thus selected meet on an appointed day, with the castemen, at the temple of the caste goddess Kāmākshi Amman. The names of the five men are written on five slips of paper, which, together with some blank slips, are thrown before the shrine of the goddess. A child, taken at random from the assembled crowd, is made to pick up the slips, and he whose name first turns up is proclaimed as Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran, and a big turban is tied on his head by the caste priest. This is called Urumā Kattaradu, and is symbolic of his having been appointed the general head of the caste. Lots are then drawn, to decide which of the remaining four shall be the Anjivīttu Kāryasthan of the newly-elected chief. At the conclusion of the ceremony, betel leaf and areca nut are given first to the new officers, then to the local officers, and finally to the assembled spectators. With this, the installation ceremony, which is called pattam-kattaradu, comes to an end. The money for the expenses thereof is, if necessary, taken from the funds of the temple, but a special collection is generally made for the occasion, and is, it is said, responded to with alacrity. The Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran is theoretically invested with full powers over the caste, and all members thereof are expected to obey his orders. He is the final adjudicator of civil and matrimonial causes. The divisional heads have power to decide such causes, and they report their decisions to the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran, who generally confirms them. If, for any reason, the parties concerned do not agree to abide by the decision, they are advised to take their cause to one of the established courts. The Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran has at times to nominate, and always the right to confirm or not, the selection of the divisional heads. In conjunction with the Kāryasthan

and the local heads, he may appoint Nāttāmaikkārans and Kāryasthans to particular places, and delegate his powers to them. This is done in places where the caste is represented in considerable numbers, as at Sholavandan and Vattalagūndu in the Madura district. In this connection, a quaint custom may be noted. The Pallans, who are known as "the sons of the caste" in villages of the Madura and Tinnevelly districts, are called together, and informed that a particular village is about to be converted into a local Anjivīttu Nāttānmai, and that they must possess a Nāttāmaikkāran and Kāryasthan for themselves. These are nominated in practice by the Pallans, and the nomination is confirmed by the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran. From that day, they have a right to get new ploughs from the Kallans free of charge, and give them in return a portion of the produce of the land. The local Nāttāmaikkārans are practically under the control of the Kāryasthan of the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran, and, as the phrase goes, they are "bound down to" the words of this official, who possesses great power and influence with the community. The local officials may be removed from office by the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran or his Kāryasthan, but this is rarely done, and only when, for any valid reason, the sub-divisions insist on it. The mode of resigning office is for the Nāttāmaikkāran or Kāryasthan to bring betel leaf and areca nut, lay them before the Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran, or his Kāryasthan, and prostrate himself in front of him. There is a tendency for the various offices to become hereditary, provided those succeeding to them are rich and respected by the community. The Anjivīttu Nāttāmaikkāran is entitled to the first betel at caste weddings, even outside his own jurisdiction. His powers are in striking contrast with those of the caste Guru, who resides in Tinnevelly,

and occasionally travels northwards. He purifies, it is said, those who are charged with drinking intoxicating liquor, eating flesh, or crossing the sea, if such persons subject themselves to his jurisdiction. If they do not, he does not even exercise the power of excommunication, which he nominally possesses. He is not a Sanyāsi, but a Grihastha or householder. He marries his daughters to castemen, though he refrains from eating in their houses.

The dead are, as a rule, buried in a sitting posture, but, at the present day, cremation is sometimes resorted to. Death pollution, as among some other non-Brāhmanical castes, lasts for sixteen days. It is usual for a Pandāram to officiate at the death ceremonies. On the first day, the corpse is anointed with oil, and given a soap-nut bath. On the third day, five lingams are made with mud, of which four are placed in the four corners at the spot where the corpse was buried, and the fifth is placed in the centre. Food is distributed on the fifth day to Pandārams and the castemen. Srādh (annual death ceremony) is not as a rule performed, except in some of the larger towns.

The Kammālans profess the Saiva form of the Brāhman religion, and reverence greatly Pillaiyar, the favourite son of Siva. A few have come under the Lingāyat influence. The caste, however, has its own special goddess Kāmākshi Amma, who is commonly spoken of as Vriththi Daivam. She is worshipped by all the sub-divisions, and female children are frequently named after her. She is represented by the firepot and bellows-fire at which the castemen work, and presides over them. On all auspicious occasions, the first betel and dakshina (present of money) are set apart in her name, and sent to the pūjāri (priest) of the local temple dedicated

to her. Oaths are taken in her name, and disputes affecting the caste are settled before her temple. There also elections to caste offices are held. The exact connection of the goddess Kāmākshi with the caste is not known. There is, however, a vague tradition that she was one of the virgins who committed suicide by throwing herself into a fire, and was in consequence deified. Various village goddesses (grāma dēvata) are also worshipped, and, though the Kammālans profess to be vegetarians, animal sacrifices are offered to them. Among these deities are the Saptha Kannimar or seven virgins, Kōchadē Periyāndavan, and Periya Nayanar. Those who worship the Saptha Kannimar are known by the name of Mādāvaguppu, or the division that worships the mothers. Those who revere the other two deities mentioned are called Nādīkā Vamsathāl, or those descended from men who, through the seven virgins, attained eternal bliss. Kōchadē Periyāndavan is said to be a corruption of Or Jatē Periya Pāndyan, meaning the great Pāndya with the single lock. He is regarded as Vishnu, and Periya Nayanar is held to be a manifestation of Siva. The former is said to have been the person who invited the Tattāns (who called themselves Pāndya Tattāns) to settle in his kingdom. It is traditionally stated that they emigrated from the north, and settled in the Madura and Tinnevelly districts. An annual festival in honour of Kōchadē Periyāndavan is held in these districts, for the expenses in connection with which a subscription is raised among the five sub-divisions. The festival lasts over three days. On the first day, the image of the deified king is anointed with water, and a mixture of the juices of the mango, jāk (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and plantain, called muppala pūjai. On the second day, rice is boiled, and offered to the god, and, on the last day,

a healthy ram is sacrificed to him. This festival is said to be held, in order to secure the caste as a whole against evils that might overtake it. Tac'chans (carpenters) usually kill, or cut the ear of a ram or sheep, whenever they commence the woodwork of a new house, and smear the blood of the animal on a pillar or wall of the house.

The Kammālans claim to be descended from Visvakarma, the architect of the gods, and, in some places, claim to be superior to Brāhmans, calling the latter Gō-Brāhmans, and themselves Visva Brāhmans. Visvakarma is said to have had five sons, named Manu, Maya, Silpa, Tvashtra, and Daivagna. These five sons were the originators of the five crafts, which their descendants severally follow. Accordingly, some engage in smithy work, and are called Manus; others, in their turn, devote their attention to carpentry. These are named Mayas. Others again, who work at stone-carving, are known as Silpis. Those who do metal work are Tvashtras, and those who are engaged in making jewelry are known as Visvagnas or Daivagnas. According to one story of the origin of the Kammālans, they are the descendants of the issue of a Brāhman and a Bēri Chetti woman. Hence the proverb that the Kammālans and the Bēri Chettis are one. Another story, recorded in the Mackenzie manuscripts, which is current all over the Tamil country, is briefly as follows. In the town of Māndāpuri, the Kammālans of the five divisions formerly lived closely united together. They were employed by all sorts of people, as there were no other artificers in the country, and charged very high rates for their wares. They feared and respected no king. This offended the kings of the country, who combined against them. As the fort in which the Kammālans concealed themselves, called Kāntakkōttai, was entirely constructed of loadstone, all

the weapons were drawn away by it. The king then promised a big reward to anyone who would burn down the fort, and at length the Dēva-dāsīs (courtesans) of a temple undertook to do this, and took betel and nut in signification of their promise. The king built a fort for them opposite Kāntakkōttai, and they attracted the Kammālans by their singing, and had children by them. One of the Dēva-dāsīs at length succeeded in extracting from a young Kammālan the secret that, if the fort was surrounded with varaghu straw and set on fire, it would be destroyed. The king ordered that this should be done, and, in attempting to escape from the sudden conflagration, some of the Kammālans lost their lives. Others reached the ships, and escaped by sea, or were captured and put to death. In consequence of this, artificers ceased to exist in the country. One pregnant Kammālan woman, however, took refuge in the house of a Bēri Chetti, and escaped decapitation by being passed off as his daughter. The country was sorely troubled owing to the want of artificers, and agriculture, manufactures, and weaving suffered a great deal. One of the kings wanted to know if any Kammālan escaped the general destruction, and sent round his kingdom a piece of coral possessing a tortuous aperture running through it, and a piece of thread. A big reward was promised to anyone who should succeed in passing the thread through the coral. At last, the boy born of the Kammālan woman in the Chetti's house undertook to do it. He placed the coral over the mouth of an ant-hole, and, having steeped the thread in sugar, laid it down at some distance from the hole. The ants took the thread, and drew it through the coral. The king, being pleased with the boy, sent him presents, and gave him more work to do. This he performed with the assistance of his mother, and satisfied

the king. The king, however, grew suspicious, and, having sent for the Chetti, enquired concerning the boy's parentage. The Chetti thereon detailed the story of his birth. The king provided him with the means for making ploughshares on a large scale, and got him married to the daughter of a Chetti, and made gifts of land for the maintenance of the couple. The Chetti woman bore him five sons, who followed the five branches of work now carried out by the Kammālan caste. The king gave them the title of Panchayudhattar, or those of the five kinds of weapons. They now intermarry with each other, and, as children of the Chetti caste, wear the sacred thread. The members of the caste who fled by sea are said to have gone to China, or, according to another version, to Chingaladvīpam, or Ceylon, where Kammālans are found at the present day. In connection with the above story, it may be noted that, though ordinarily two different castes do not live in the same house, yet Bēri Chettis and Kammālans so live together. There is a close connection between the Kammālans and Acharapākam Chettis, who are a section of the Bēri Chetti caste. Kammālans and Acharapākam Chettis interdine ; both bury their dead in a sitting posture ; and the tāli (marriage badge) used by both is alike in size and make, and unlike that used by the generality of the Bēri Chetti caste. The Acharapākam Chettis are known as Malighe Chettis, and are considered to be the descendants of those Bēri Chettis who brought up the Kammālan children, and intermarried with them. Even now, in the city of Madras, when the Bēri Chettis assemble for the transaction of caste business, the notice summoning the meeting excludes the Malighe Chettis, who can neither vote nor receive votes at elections, meetings, etc., of the

Kandasāmi temple, which every other Bēri Chetti has a right to.

It may be noted that the Dēva-dāsīs, whose treachery is said to have led to the destruction of the Kammālan caste, were Kaikōlans by caste, and that their illegitimate children, like their progenitors, became weavers. The weavers of South India, according to old Tamil poems, were formerly included in the Kammiyan or Kammālan caste.* Several inscriptions show that, as late as 1013 A.D., the Kammālans were treated as an inferior caste, and, in consequence, were confined to particular parts of villages.† A later inscription gives an order of one of the Chōla kings that they should be permitted to blow conches, and beat drums at their weddings and funerals, wear sandals, and plaster their houses.‡ "It is not difficult," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,§ "to account for the low position held by the Kammālans, for it must be remembered that, in those early times, the military castes in India, as elsewhere, looked down upon all engaged in labour, whether skilled or otherwise. With the decline of the military power, however, it was natural that a useful caste like the Kammālans should generally improve its position, and the reaction from their long oppression has led them to make the exaggerated claims described above, which are ridiculed by every other caste, high or low." The claims here referred to are that they are descended from Visvakarma, the architect of the gods, and are Brāhmans.

From a note by Mr. F. R. Hemingway, I gather that the friendship between the Muhammadans and Kammālans, who call each other māni (paternal uncle)

* Maduraikanchi, Line 521.

† E. Hultzsch. South Indian Inscriptions, II, i, 44, 46, 1891.

‡ *Ibid.* III, i, 47, 1899.

§ Madras Census Report, 1891.

"originated in the fact that a holy Muhammadan, named Ibrahim Nabi, was brought up in the house of a Kammālan, because his father was afraid that he would be killed by a Hindu king named Namadūta, who had been advised by his soothsayers that he would thus avoid a disaster, which was about to befall his kingdom. The Kammālan gave his daughter to the father of Ibrahim in exchange. Another story (only told by Kammālans) is to the effect that the Kammālans were once living in a magnetic castle, called Kānda Kōttai, which could only be destroyed by burning it with varagu straw ; and that the Musalmans captured it by sending Musalman prostitutes into the town, to wheedle the secret out of the Kammālans. The friendship, according to the story, sprang up because the Kammālans consorted with the Musalman women."

The Kammālans belong to the left hand, as opposed to the right hand faction. The origin of this distinction of castes is lost in obscurity, but, according to one version, it arose out of a dispute between the Kammālans and Vellālas. The latter claimed the former as their Jātipillaigal or caste dependents, while the former claimed the latter as their own dependents. The fight grew so fierce that the Chōla king of Conjeeveram ranged these two castes and their followers on opposite sides, and enquired into their claims. The Kammālans, and those who sided with them, stood on the left of the king, and the Vellālas and their allies on the right. The king is said to have decided the case against the Kammālans, who then dispersed in different directions. According to another legend, a Kammālan who had two sons, one by a Balija woman, and the other by his Kammālan wife, was unjustly slain by a king of Conjeeveram, and was avenged by his two sons, who killed the

king and divided his body. The Kammālan son took his head and used it as a weighing pan, while the Balija son made a pedler's carpet out of the skin, and threads out of the sinews for stringing bangles. A quarrel arose, because each thought the other had got the best of the division, and all the other castes joined in, and took the side of either the Kammālan or the Balija. Right and left hand dancing-girls, temples, and mandapams, are still in existence at Conjeeveram, and elsewhere in the Tamil country. Thus, at Tanjore, there are the Kammāla Tēvadiyāls, or dancing-girls. As the Kammālans belong to the left-hand section, dancing-girls of the right-hand section will not perform before them, or at their houses. Similarly, musicians of the right-hand section will not play in Kammālan houses. In olden days, Kammālans were not allowed to ride in palanquins through the streets of the right hands. If they did, a riot was the result. Such riots were common during the eighteenth century. Thus, Fryer refers to one of these which occurred at Masulipatam, when the contumacy of the Kamsalas (Telugu artisans) led to their being put down by the other castes with the aid of the Moors.

The Kammālans call themselves Āchāri and Paththar, which are equivalent to the Brāhman titles Ācharya and Bhatta, and claim a knowledge of the Vēdas. Their own priests officiate at marriages, funerals, and on other ceremonial occasions. They wear the sacred thread, which they usually don on the Upakarmam day, though some observe the regular thread investiture ceremony. Most of them claim to be vegetarians. Non-Brāhmans do not treat them as Brāhmans, and do not salute them with the namaskāram (obeisance). Their women, unlike those of other castes, throw the end of their body-cloth

over the right shoulder, and are conspicuous by the nose ornament known as the nattu.

In connection with the professional calling of the Kammālans, Surgeon-Major W. R. Cornish writes as follows.* "The artisans, who are smiths or carpenters, usually bring up their children to the same pursuits. It might have been supposed that the hereditary influence in the course of generations would have tended to excellence in the several pursuits, but it has not been so. Ordinary native work in metal, stone, and wood, is coarse and rough, and the designs are of the stereotyped form. The improvement in handicraft work of late years has been entirely due to European influence. The constructors of railways have been great educators of artisans. The quality of stone-masonry, brick-work, carpentry, and smith-work has vastly improved within the last twenty years, and especially in districts where railway works have been in progress. The gold and silver smiths of Southern India are a numerous body. Their chief employment consists in setting and making native jewellery. Some of their designs are ingenious, but here again the ordinary work for native customers is often noticeable for a want of finish, and, with the exception of a few articles made for the European markets, there is no evidence of progressive improvement in design or execution. That the native artists are capable of improvement as a class is evident from their skill and ingenuity in copying designs set before them, and from the excellent finish of their work under European supervision ; but there must be a demand for highly finished work before the goldsmiths will have generally improved. The wearers of jewellery in India

* Madras Census Report, 1871.

look more to the intrinsic value of an article, than to the excellence of the design or workmanship. So that there is very little encouragement for artistic display." The collection of silver jewelry at the Madras Museum, which was made in connection with the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, London, 1886, bears testimony to the artistic skill of the silversmiths. Recently, Colonel Townshend, Superintendent of the Madras Gun Carriage Factory, has expressed his opinion * that "good as the Bombay smiths are, the blacksmiths of Southern India are the best in Hindustan, and the pick of them run English smiths very close, not only in skill, but in speed of outturn."

Anyone who has seen the celebrated temples of Southern India, for example, the Madura and Tanjore temples, and the carving on temple cars, can form some idea of the skill of South Indian stone-masons and carpenters. The following note on idols and idol-makers is taken from a recent article.† "The idol-maker's craft, like most of the other callings in this country, is a hereditary one, and a workman who has earned some reputation for himself, or has had an ancestor of renown, is a made man. The Sthapathi, as he is called in Sanskrit, claims high social rank among the representatives of the artisan castes. Of course he wears a heavy sacred thread, and affects Brāhman ways of living. He does not touch flesh, and liquor rarely passes down his throat, as he recognises that a clear eye and steady hand are the first essentials of success in his calling. There are two sorts of idols in every temple, mulavigrahas or stone idols which are fixed to the ground, and utsavavigrahas or metal idols used in processions.

* New Asiatic Review, Jan. 1907.

† Madras Mail, 1907.

In the worst equipped pagoda there are at least a dozen idols of every variety. They do duty for generations, for, though they become black and begrimed with oil and ashes, they are rarely replaced, as age and dirt but add to their sanctity. But now and then they get desecrated for some reason, and fresh ones have to be installed in their stead ; or it may be that extensions are made in the temple, and godlings in the Hindu Pantheon, not accommodated within its precincts till then, have to be carved and consecrated. It is on such occasions that the hands of the local Sthapathi are full of work, and his workshop is as busy as a bee-hive. In the larger temples, such as the one at Madura, the idols in which are to be counted by the score, there are Sthapathis on the establishment receiving fixed emoluments. Despite the smallness of the annual salary, the office of temple Sthapathi is an eagerly coveted one, for, among other privileges, the fortunate individual enjoys that of having his workshop located in the temple premises, and thereby secures an advertisement that is not to be despised. Besides, he is not debarred from adding to his pecuniary resources by doing outside work when his hands are idle. Among stone images, the largest demand is for representations of Ganapati or Vignesvara (the elephant god), whose popularity extends throughout India. Every hamlet has at least one little temple devoted to his exclusive worship, and his shrines are found in the most unlikely places. Travellers who have had occasion to pass along the sandy roads of the Tanjore district must be familiar with the idols of the god of the protuberant paunch, which they pass every half mile or so, reposing under the shade of avenue trees with an air of self-satisfaction suffusing their elephantine features. Among other idols called into being for the purpose of

wayside installation in Southern India, may be mentioned those of Vīran, the Madura godling, who requires offerings of liquor, Māriamma, the small-pox goddess, and the evil spirit Sangili Karappan. Representations are also carved of nāgas or serpents, and installed by the dozen round the village asvatha tree (*Ficus religiosa*). Almost every week, the mail steamer to Rangoon takes a heavy consignment of stone and metal idols commissioned by the South Indian settlers in Burma for purposes of domestic and public worship. The usual posture of mulavigrahas is a standing one, the figure of Vishnu in the Srirangam temple, which represents the deity as lying down at full length, being an exception to this rule. The normal height is less than four feet, some idols, however, being of gigantic proportions. Considering the very crude material on which he works, and the primitive methods of stone-carving which he continues to favour, the expert craftsman achieves quite a surprising degree of smoothness and polish. It takes him several weeks of unremitting toil to produce a vigraha that absolutely satisfies his critical eye. I have seen him engaged for hours at a stretch on the trunk of Vignesvara or the matted tuft of a Rishi. The casting of utsavavigrahas involves a greater variety of process than the carving of stone figures. The substance usually employed is a compound of brass, copper and lead, small quantities of silver and gold being added, means permitting. The required figure is first moulded in some plastic substance, such as wax or tallow, and coated with a thin layer of soft wet clay, in which one or two openings are left. When the clay is dry, the figure is placed in a kiln, and the red-hot liquid metal is poured into the hollow created by the running out of the melted wax. The furnace is then

extinguished, the metal left to cool and solidify, and the clay coating removed. A crude approximation to the image required is thus obtained, which is improved upon with file and chisel, till the finished product is a far more artistic article than the figure that was enclosed within the clay. It is thus seen that every idol is made in one piece, but spare hands and feet are supplied, if desired. Whenever necessary, the Archaka (temple priest) conceals the limbs with cloth and flowers, and, inserting at the proper places little pieces of wood which are held in position by numerous bits of string, screws on the spare parts, so as to fit in with the posture that the idol is to assume during any particular procession."

An association, called the Visvakarma Kulābhimana Sabha, was established in the city of Madras by the Kammālans in 1903. The objects thereof were the advancement of the community as a whole on intellectual and industrial lines, the provision of practical measures in guarding the interests, welfare and prospects of the community, and the improvement of the arts and sciences peculiar to them by opening industrial schools and workshops, etc.

Of proverbs relating to the artisan classes, the following may be noted :—

The goldsmith who has a thousand persons to answer. This in reference to the delay in finishing a job, owing to his taking more orders than he can accomplish in a given time.

The goldsmith knows what ornaments are of fine gold, *i.e.*, knows who are the rich men of a place.

It must either be with the goldsmith, or in the pot in which he melts gold, *i.e.*, it will be found somewhere in the house. Said to one who is in search of something that cannot be found.

Goldsmiths put inferior gold into the refining-pot.

If, successful, pour it into a mould; if not, pour it into the melting pot. The Rev. H. Jensen explains* that the goldsmith examines the gold after melting it. If it is free from dross, he pours it into the mould; if it is still impure, it goes back into the pot.

The goldsmith will steal a quarter of the gold of even his own mother.

Stolen gold may be either with the goldsmith, or in his fire-pot.

If the ear of the cow of a Kammālan is cut and examined, some wax will be found in it. It is said that the Kammālan is in the habit of substituting sealing-wax for gold, and thus cheating people. The proverb warns them not to accept even a cow from a Kammālan. Or, according to another explanation, a Kammālan made a figure of a cow, which was so lifelike that a Brāhman purchased it as a live animal with his hard-earned money, and, discovering his mistake, went mad. Since that time, people were warned to examine an animal offered for sale by Kammālans by cutting off its ears. A variant of the proverb is that, though you buy a Kammālan's cow only after cutting its ears, he will have put red wax in its ears (so that, if they are cut into, they will look like red flesh).

What has a dog to do in a blacksmith's shop? Said of a man who attempts to do work he is not fitted for.

When the blacksmith sees that the iron is soft, he will raise himself to the stroke.

Will the blacksmith be alarmed at the sound of a hammer?

---

* Classified Collection of Tamil Proverbs, 1897, from which some of the proverbs quoted are taken.

When a child is born in a blacksmith's family, sugar must be dealt out in the street of the dancing-girls. This has reference to the legendary relation of the Kammālans and Kaikōlans.

A blacksmith's shop, and the place in which donkeys roll themselves, are alike.

The carpenters and blacksmiths are to be relegated, *i.e.*, to the part of the village called the Kammālachēri.

What if the carpenter's wife has become a widow? This would seem to refer to the former practice of widow remarriage.

The carpenter wants (his wood) too long, and the blacksmith wants (his iron) too short, *i.e.*, a carpenter can easily shorten a piece of wood, and a blacksmith can easily hammer out a piece of iron.

When a Kammālan buys cloth, the stuff he buys is so thin that it does not hide the hair on his legs.

Kammālan (Malayālam).—"The Kammālans of Malabar," Mr. Francis writes,* "are artisans, like those referred to immediately above, but they take a lower position than the Kammālans and Kamsalas of the other coast, or the Pānchālas of the Canarese country. They do not claim to be Brāhmans or wear the sacred thread, and they accept the position of a polluting caste, not being allowed into the temples or into Brāhman houses. The highest sub-division is Asāri, the men of which are carpenters, and wear the thread at certain ceremonies connected with house-building."

According to Mr. F. Fawcett "the orthodox number of classes of Kammālans is five. But the artisans do not admit that the workers in leather belong to the

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

guild, and say that there are only four classes. According to them, the fifth class was composed of coppersmiths, who, after the exodus, remained in Izhuva land, and did not return thence with them to Malabar.* Nevertheless, they always speak of themselves as the Ayen Kudi or five-house Kammālans. The carpenters say that eighteen families of their community remained behind in Izhuva land. Some of these returned long afterwards, but they were not allowed to rejoin the caste. They are known as Puzhi Tachan or sand carpenters, and Pathinettanmar or the eighteen people. There are four families of this class now living at or near Parpan gadi. They are carpenters, but the Asāris treat them as outcastes."

For the following note on Malabar Kammālans I am indebted to Mr. S. Appadorai Iyer. The five artisan classes, or Ayinkudi Kammālans, are made up of the following :—

Asāri, carpenters.	Karumān, blacksmiths.
Mūsāri, braziers.	Chembotti or Chempotti, coppersmiths.
Tattān, goldsmiths.	

The name Chembotti is derived from chembu, copper, and kotti, he who beats. They are, according to Mr. Francis, "coppersmiths in Malabar, who are distinct from the Malabar Kammālans. They are supposed to be descendants of men who made copper idols for temples, and so rank above the Kammālans in social position, and about equally with the lower sections of the Nāyars."

The Kammālans will not condescend to eat food at the hands of Kurups, Tōlkollans, Pulluvans, Mannāns, or Tandans. But a Tandan thinks it equally beneath

* *See* the legendary story narrated in the article on Tiyans.

his dignity to accept food from a Kammālan. The Kammālans believe themselves to be indigenous in Malabar, and boast that their system of polyandry is the result of the sojourn of the exiled Pāndavas, with their common wife Pānchāli, and their mother Kunthi, in the forest of the Walluvanād division. They say that the destruction of the Pāndavas was attempted in the Arakkuparamba amsam of this division, and that the Tac'chans (artisans) were given as a reward by the Kurus the enjoyment of Tacchanattukara amsam. They state further that the Pāndus lived for some time at the village of Bhīmanād, and went to the Attapādi valley, where they deposited their cooking utensils at the spot where the water falls from a height of several hundred feet. This portion of the river is called Kuntipuzha, and the noise of the water, said to be falling on the upset utensils, is heard at a great distance.

The Kammālans, male and female, dress like Nāyars, and their ornaments are almost similar to those of the Nāyars, with this difference, that the female Tattān wears a single chittu or ring in the right ear only.

In the building of a house, the services of the Asāri are required throughout. He it is who draws the plan of the building. And, when a door is fixed or beam raised, he receives his perquisite. The completion of a house is signified as a rule by a kutti-poosa. For this ceremony, the owner of the house has to supply the workmen with at least four goats to be sacrificed at the four corners thereof, a number of fowls to be killed so that the blood may be smeared on the walls and ceiling, and an ample meal with liquor. The feast concluded, the workmen receive presents of rings, gold ear-rings, silk and other cloths, of which the Moothasāri or chief carpenter receives the lion's share. "The village

carpenter," Mr. Gopal Panikkar writes,* "has to do everything connected with our architecture, such as fixing poles or wickets at the exact spot where buildings are to be erected, and clearing newly erected buildings of all devils and demons that may be haunting them. This he does by means of pūjas (worship) performed after the completion of the building. But people have begun to break through the village traditions, and to entrust architectural work to competent hands, when the village carpenter is found incompetent for the same."

It is noted by Canter Visscher † that "in commencing the building of a house, the first prop must be put up on the east side. The carpenters open three or four cocoanuts, spilling the juice as little as possible, and put some tips of betel leaves into them; and, from the way these float in the liquid, they foretell whether the house will be lucky or unlucky, whether it will stand for a long or short period, and whether another will ever be erected on its site. I have been told that the heathens say that the destruction of fort Paponetti by our arms was foretold by the builders from these auguries."

The blacksmith is employed in the manufacture of locks and keys, and ornamental iron and brasswork for the houses of the rich. The smithy is near the dwelling hut, and the wife blows the bellows. The smith makes tyres for wheels, spades, choppers, knives, sickles, iron spoons, ploughshares, shoes for cattle and horses, etc. These he takes to the nearest market, and sells there. In some places there are clever smiths, who make excellent chellams (betel boxes) of brass, and there is one man at Walluvanād who even makes stylographic pens.

---

* Malabar and its Folk, 1900. † Letters from Malabar.

The Mūsāri works in bell-metal, and makes all kinds of household utensils, and large vessels for cooking purposes. He is an adept at making such articles with the proper proportions of copper, lead and brass. In some of the houses of the wealthier classes there are cooking utensils, which cost nearly a thousand rupees. Excellent bell-metal articles are made at Cherpalcheri, and Kunhimangalam in North Malabar is celebrated for its bell-metal lamps. The importation of enamelled and aluminium vessels, and lamps made in Europe, has made such inroads into the metal industry of the district that the brazier and blacksmith find their occupation declining.

The goldsmith makes all kinds of gold ornaments worn by Malaiālis. His lot is better than that of the other artisan classes.

It is noted in the Malabar Marriage Commission's report that "among carpenters and blacksmiths in the Calicut, Walluvanād and Ponnāni taluks, several brothers have one wife between them, although the son succeeds the father amongst them." Polyandry of the fraternal type is said to be most prevalent among the blacksmiths, who lead the most precarious existence, and have to observe the strictest economy. As with the Nāyars, the tāli-kettu kalyānam has to be celebrated. For this the parents of the child have to find a suitable manavālan or bridegroom by the consultation of horoscopes. An auspicious day is fixed, and new cloths are presented to the manavālan. The girl bathes, and puts on new clothes. She and the manavālan are conducted to a pandal (booth), where the tāli-tying ceremony takes place. This concluded, the manavālan takes a thread from the new cloth, and breaks it in two, saying that his union with the girl has ceased. He then walks away

without looking back. When a Kammālan contemplates matrimony, his parents look out for a suitable bride. They are received by the girl's parents, and enquiries are made concerning her. The visit is twice repeated, and, when an arrangement has been arrived at, the village astrologer is summoned, and the horoscopes of the contracting parties are consulted. It is sufficient if the horoscope of one of the sons agrees with that of the girl. The parents of the sons deposit as earnest money, or āchcharapanam, four, eight, twelve, or twenty-one fanams according to their means, in the presence of the artisans of the village; and a new cloth (kacha) is presented to the bride, who thus becomes the wife of all the sons. There are instances in which the girl, after the āchcharam marriage, is immediately taken to the husband's house. All the brother-husbands, dressed in new clothes and decorated with ornaments, with a new palmyra leaf umbrella in the hand, come in procession to the bride's house, where they are received by her parents and friends, and escorted to the marriage pandal. The bride and bridegrooms sit in a row, and the girl's parents give them fruits and sugar. This ceremony is called mathuram kotukkal. The party then adjourns to the house of the bridegrooms where a feast is held, in the course of which a ceremony called pāl kotukkal is performed. The priest of the Kammālans takes some milk in a vessel, and pours it into the mouths of the bride and bridegrooms, who are seated, the eldest on the right, the others in order of seniority, and lastly the bride. During the nuptials the parents of the bride have to present a water-vessel, lamp, eating dish, cooking vessel, spittoon, and a vessel for drawing water from the well. The eldest brother cohabits with the bride on the wedding day, and special days are set apart for each brother.

There seems to be a belief among the Kammālan women that, the more husbands they have, the greater will be their happiness. If one of the brothers, on the ground of incompatibility of temper, brings a new wife, she is privileged to cohabit with the other brothers. In some cases, a girl will have brothers ranging in age from twenty-five to five, whom she has to regard as her husband, so that by the time the youngest reaches puberty she may be well over thirty, and a young man has to perform the duties of a husband with a woman who is twice his age.

If a woman becomes pregnant before the āchchara kalyānam has been performed, her parents are obliged to satisfy the community that her condition was caused by a man of their own caste, and he has to marry the girl. If the paternity cannot be traced, a council is held, and the woman is turned out of the caste. In the sixth or eighth month of pregnancy, the woman is taken to her mother's house, where the first confinement takes place. During her stay there the pulikudi ceremony is performed. The husbands come, and present their wife with a new cloth. A branch of a tamarind tree is planted in the yard of the house, and, in the presence of the relations, the brother of the pregnant woman gives her conji (rice gruel) mixed with the juices of the tamarind, *Spondias mangifera* and *Hibiscus*, to drink. The customary feast then takes place. A barber woman (Mannathi) acts as midwife. On the fourteenth day after childbirth, the Thali-kurup sprinkles water over the woman, and the Mannathi gives her a newly-washed cloth to wear. Purification concludes with a bath on the fifteenth day. On the twenty-eighth day the child-naming ceremony takes place. The infant is placed in its father's lap, and in front of it are set a

measure of rice and paddy (unhusked rice) on a plantain leaf. A brass lamp is raised, and a cocoanut broken. The worship of Ganēsa takes place, and the child is named after its grandfather or grandmother. In the sixth month the chōronu or rice-giving ceremony takes place. In the first year of the life of a boy the ears are pierced, and gold ear-rings inserted. In the case of a girl, the ear-boring ceremony takes place in the sixth or seventh year. The right nostril of girls is also bored, and mukkuthi worn therein.

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, that, "amongst Kammālans, the betrothal ceremony is similar to that of the Tiyans. If more than one brother is to be married, to the same girl, her mother asks how many bridegrooms there are, and replies that there are mats and planks for so many. Cohabitation sometimes begins from the night of the betrothal, the eldest brother having the priority, and the rest in order of seniority on introduction by the bride's brother. If the girl becomes pregnant, the formal marriage must be celebrated before the pregnancy has advanced six months. At the formal marriage, the bridegrooms are received by the bride's mother and brothers; two planks are placed before a lighted lamp, before which the bridegrooms and the bride's brothers prostrate themselves. The bride is dressed in a new cloth, and brought down by the bridegroom's sister and fed with sweetmeats.

"Next day all the bridegroom's party visit the Tandān of the bride's desam (village), who has to give them arrack (liquor) and meat, receiving in his turn a present of two fanams (money). The next day the bride is again feasted in her house by the bridegrooms, and is given her dowry consisting of four metal plates, one

spittoon, one kindi (metal vessel), and a bell-metal lamp. The whole party then goes to the bridegroom's house, where the Tandān proclaims the titles of the parties and their desam. All the brothers who are to share in the marriage sit in a row on a mat with the bride on the extreme left, and all drink cocoanut milk. The presence of all the bridegrooms is essential at this final ceremony, though for the preceding formalities it is sufficient if the eldest is present."

The Kammālans burn the corpses of adults, and bury the young. Fifteen days' pollution is observed, and at the expiration thereof the Thal-kurup pours water, and purification takes place. On the third day the bones of the cremated corpse are collected, and placed in a new earthen pot, which is buried in the grounds of the house of the deceased. One of the sons performs beli (makes offerings), and observes dīksha (hair-growing) for a year. The bones are then carried to Tirunavaya in Ponnāni, Tiruvilamala in Cochin territory, Perūr in Coimbatore, or Tirunelli in the Wynād, and thrown into the river. A final beli is performed, and the srādh memorial ceremony is celebrated. If the deceased was skilled in sorcery, or his death was due thereto, his ghost is believed to haunt the house, and trouble the inmates. To appease it, the village washerman (Mannān) is brought with his drums, and, by means of his songs, forces the devil into one of the members of the household, who is made to say what murthi or evil spirit possesses him, and how it should be satisfied. It is then appeased with the sacrifice of ā fowl, and drinking the juice of tender cocoanuts. A further demand is that it must have a place consigned to it in the house or grounds, and be worshipped once a year. Accordingly, seven days later, a small stool

representing the deceased is placed in a corner of one of the rooms, and there worshipped annually with offerings of cocoanuts, toddy, arrack, and fowls. In the grounds of some houses small shrines, erected to the memory of the dead, may be seen. These are opened once a year, and offerings made to them.

The Kammālans worship various minor deities, such as Thīkutti, Parakutti, Kala Bairavan, and others. Some only worship stone images erected under trees annually. They have barbers of their own, of whom the Mannān shaves the men, and the Mannathi the women. These individuals are not admitted into the Mannān caste, which follows the more honourable profession of washing clothes.

In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the following sub-castes of Malabar Kammālans are recorded:—Kallan Muppan and Kallukkotti (stone-workers), Kottōn (brass-smith), Pon Chetti (gold merchant), and Pūliasāri (masons). In the Cochin Census Report, 1901, it is stated that "the Kammālans are divided into six sub-castes, viz., Marāsāri (carpenter), Kallasāri (mason), Mūsāri (brazier), Kollan (blacksmith), Tattān (goldsmith), and Tōlkollan (leather-worker). Of these six, the first five interdine, and intermarry. The Tōlkollan is considered a degraded caste, probably on account of his working in leather, which in its earlier stages is an unholy substance. The other sub-castes do not allow the Tōlkollans even to touch them. Among the Marāsāris are included the Marāsāris proper and Tacchans. The Tacchans are looked upon by other castes in the group as a separate caste, and are not allowed to touch them. All the sub-castes generally follow the makkathāyam law of inheritance, but there are some vestiges of marumakkathāyam also among them.

There is a sub-caste called Kuruppu, who are their barbers and priests. They officiate as priest at marriage and funeral ceremonies. When they enter the interior shrine of temples for work in connection with the image of a god, or with the temple flagstaff, the Asāri and Mūsāri temporarily wear a sacred thread, which is a rare privilege. Their approach within a radius of twenty-four feet pollutes Brāhmans. On the completion of a building, the Marāsāri, Kallāsāri and Kollan perform certain pūjas, and sacrifice a fowl or sheep to drive out the demons and devils which are supposed to have haunted the house till then."

For the following note on the Kammālans of Travancore, I am indebted to Mr. N. Subramania Aiyar. "The titles of the Malayālam Kammālans are Panikkan and Kanakkan. The word Panikkan means a worker, and Kanakkan is the title given to a few old and respectable Kammālas in every village, who superintend the work of others, and receive the highest remuneration. It is their business to sketch the plan of a building, and preside at the vastubali rite. Many Tamil Kammālans have naturalised themselves on the west coast, and speak Malayālam. Between them and the Malayālam Kammālans neither intermarriage nor interdining obtains. The latter are divided into five classes, viz., Asāri or Marapanikkan (workers in wood), Kallan or Kallāsāri (workers in stone), Mūsāri (braziers and coppersmiths), Tattān (goldsmiths), and Kollan (workers in iron). To these the Jātinirnaya and Kēralavisēshamāhātmya add a sixth class, the Tacchan or Irchchakollan, whose occupation is to fell trees and saw timber. The Tacchans are also known as Villasans (bowmen), as they were formerly required to supply bows and arrows for the Travancore army.

Epigraphic records point to the existence of the five classes of Kammālans in Malabar at least as early as the beginning of the ninth century A.D., as a Syrian Christian grant refers to them as Aimvazhi Kammālas. There is a tradition that they were brought to Kērala by Parasu Rāma, but left in a body for Ceylon on being pressed by one of the early Perumāl satraps of Cranganūr to marry into the washerman caste, after they had by a special arrangement of the marriage shed trapped to death a large number of that obnoxious community. The King of Ceylon was requested, as an act of international courtesy, to send back some of the Kammālans. As, however, they were loth to return to their former persecutor, they were sent in charge of some Izhavas, who formed the military caste of the island. The legend is given in detail by Canter Visscher, who writes as follows. "In the time of Cheramperoumal, a woman belonging to the caste of the washermen, whose house adjoined that of an Ajari (the carpenter caste), being occupied as usual in washing a cloth in water mixed with ashes (which is here used for soap), and having no one at hand to hold the other end of it, called to a young daughter of the Ajari, who was alone in the house, to assist her. The child, not knowing that this was an infringement of the laws of her caste, did as she was requested, and then went home. The washerwoman was emboldened by this affair to enter the Ajari's house a few days afterwards; and, upon the latter demanding angrily how she dared to cross his threshold, the woman answered scornfully that he belonged now to the same caste as she did, since his daughter had helped to hold her cloth. The Ajari, learning the disgrace that had befallen him, killed the washerwoman. Upon this, her friends complained to Cheramperoumal, who espoused

their cause, and threatened the carpenters; whereupon the latter combined together to take refuge in Ceylon, where they were favourably received by the King of Candy, for whom the Malabars have great veneration. Cheramperoumal was placed in great embarrassment by their departure, having no one in his dominions who could build a house or make a spoon, and begged the King of Candy to send them back, promising to do them no injury. The Ajaris would not place entire confidence in these promises, but asked the king to send them with two Chegos (Chōgans) and their wives, to witness Cheramperoumal's conduct towards them, and to protect them. The king granted their request, with the stipulation that on all high occasions, such as weddings and deaths and other ceremonies, the Ajaris should bestow three measures of rice on each of these Chegos and their descendants as a tribute for their protection; a custom which still exists. If the Ajari is too poor to afford the outlay, he is still obliged to present the requisite quantity of rice, which is then given back to him again; the privilege of the Chegos being thus maintained.

"The Kammālans are to some extent educated, and a few of them have a certain knowledge of Sanskrit, in which language several works on architecture are to be found. Their houses, generally known as kottil, are only low thatched sheds. They eat fish and flesh, and drink intoxicating liquors. Their jewelry is like that of the Nāyars, from whom, however, they are distinguished by not wearing the nose ornaments mukkutti and gnattu. Some in Central Travancore wear silver mukkuttis. Tattooing, once very common, is going out of fashion.

"In timber work the Asāris excel, but the Tamil Kammālans have outstripped the Tattāns in gold and

silver work. The house-building of the Asāri has a *quasi*-religious aspect. When a temple is built, there is a preliminary rite known as anujgna, when the temple priest transfers spiritual force from the image, after which a cow and calf are taken thrice round the temple, and the Kanakkan is invited to enter within for the purposes of work. The cow and calf are let loose in front of the carpenter, who advances, and commences the work. On the completion of a building, an offering known as vastubali is made. Vastu is believed to represent the deity who presides over the house, and the spirits inhabiting the trees which were felled for the purpose of building it. To appease these supernatural powers, the figure of a demon is drawn with powders, and the Kanakkan, after worshipping his tutelary deity Bhadrakāli, offers animal sacrifices to him in non-Brāhmanical houses, and vegetable sacrifices in Brāhman shrines and homes. An old and decrepit carpenter enters within the new building, and all the doors thereof are closed. The Kanakkan from without asks whether he has inspected everything, and is prepared to hold himself responsible for any architectural or structural shortcomings, and he replies in the affirmative. A jubilant cry is then raised by all the assembled Asāris. Few carpenters are willing to undertake this dangerous errand, as it is supposed that the dissatisfied demons are sure to make short work of the man who accepts the responsibility. The figure is next effaced, and no one enters the house until the auspicious hour of milk-boiling.

"Vilkuruppu or Vilkollakkuruppu, who used formerly to supply bows and arrows for the Malabar army, are the recognised priests and barbers of the Kammālans. They still make and present bows and arrows at the

Ōnam festival. In some places the Kammālans have trained members of their own caste to perform the priestly offices. The Malayāla Kammālans, unlike the Tamils, are not a thread-wearing class, but sometimes put on a thread when they work in temples or at images. They worship Kāli, Mātan, and other divinities. Unlike the Tamil Kammālans, they are a polluting class, but, when they have their working tools with them, they are less objectionable. In some places, as in South Travancore, they are generally regarded as higher in rank than the Izhavas, though this is not universal.

"The tāli-kettu ceremony is cancelled by a ceremony called vāzhippu, by which all connection between the tāli-tier and the girl is extinguished. The wedding ornament is exactly the same as that of the Izhavas, and is known as the minnu (that which shines). The system of inheritance is makkathāyam. It is naturally curious that, among a makkathāyam community, paternal polyandry should have been the rule till lately. 'The custom,' says Mateer, 'of one woman having several husbands is sometimes practiced by carpenters, stone-masons, and individuals of other castes. Several brothers living together are unable to support a single wife for each, and take one, who resides with them all. The children are reckoned to belong to each brother in succession in the order of seniority.' But this, after all, admits of explanation. If only the marumakkathāyam system of inheritance is taken, as it should be, as a necessary institution in a society living in troublous times, and among a community whose male members had duties and risks which would not ordinarily permit of the family being perpetuated solely through the male line, and not indicating any paternal uncertainty as some theorists would have it; and if polyandry, which is much

more recent than the marumakkathāyam system of inheritance, is recognised to be the deplorable result of indigence, individual and national, and not of sexual bestiality, there is no difficulty in understanding how a makkathāyam community can be polyandrous. Further, the manners of the Kammālars lend a negative support to the origin just indicated by the marumakkathāyam system of inheritance even among the Nāyars. The work of the Kammālars was within doors and at home, not even in a large factory where power-appliances may lend an element of risk, for which reason they found it quite possible to keep up lineage in the paternal line, which the fighting Nāyars could not possibly do. And the fact that the marumakkathāyam system was ordained only for the Kshatriyas, and for the fighting races, and not for the religious and industrial classes, deserves to be specially noted in this connection."

Kammara.—The Kammaras are the blacksmith section of the Telugu Kamsalas, whose services are in great demand by the cultivator, whose agricultural implements have to be made, and constantly repaired. It is noted, in the Bellary Gazetteer, that "until recently the manufacture of the huge shallow iron pans, in which the sugar-cane is boiled, was a considerable industry at Kāmalāpuram. The iron was brought by pack bullocks from Jambunath Konda, the dome-shaped hill at the Hospet end of the Sandūr range, and was smelted and worked by men of the Kammara caste. Of late years, the cheaper English iron has completely ousted the country product, the smelting industry is dead, and the Kammaras confine themselves to making and mending the boilers with English material. They have a temple of their own, dedicated to Kāli, in the village, where the worship is conducted by one of themselves." The name

Baita Kammara, meaning outside blacksmiths, is applied to Kamsala blacksmiths, who occupy a lowly position, and work in the open air or outside a village.*

Kammiyan.—A Tamil name for blacksmiths.

Kampa (bush of thorns).—An exogamous sept of Yerukala.

Kāmpo.—In the Manual of the Ganjam district, the Kāmpos are described as Oriya agriculturists. In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the name is taken as an Oriya form of Kāpu. Kāmpu is the name for Savaras, who have adopted the customs of the Hindu Kāmpos.

Kamsala.—The Kamsalas, or, as they are sometimes called, Kamsaras, are the Telugu equivalent of the Tamil Kammālans. They are found northward as far as Berhampore in Ganjam. According to tradition, as narrated in the note on Kammālans, they emigrated to the districts in which they now live on the disruption of their caste by a certain king. The Kamsalas of Vizagapatam, where they are numerically strong, say that, during the reign of a Chōla king, their ancestors claimed equality with Brāhmans. This offended the king, and he ordered their destruction. The Kamsalas fled northward, and some escaped death by taking shelter with people of the Ozu caste. As an acknowledgment of their gratitude to their protectors, some of them have Ozu added to their house-names, *e.g.*, Lakkozu, Kattozu, Patozu, etc.

The Kamsalas have territorial sub-divisions, such as Murikinādu, Pākinādu, Drāvida, etc. Like the Kammālans, they have five occupational sections, called Kamsali (goldsmiths), Kanchāri or Mūsāri (brass-smiths), Vadrangi

---

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

(carpenters), and Kāsi or Silpi (stone-masons). In a note on the Kamsalas of the Godāvari district, Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes that "they recognise two main divisions, called Desāyi (indigenous) and Turpusākas (easterns) or immigrants from Vizagapatam. They sometimes speak of their occupational sub-divisions as gōtras. Thus, Sanāthana is the iron, Sānaga, the wooden, Abhōnasa, the brass, Prathanasa, the stone, and Suparnasa, the gold gōtra." Intermarriage takes place between members of the different sections, but the goldsmiths affect a higher social status than the blacksmiths, and do not care to interdine or intermarry with them. They have taken to calling themselves Brāhmans, have adopted Brāhmanical gōtras, and the Brāhmanical form of marriage rites. They quote a number of well-known verses of the Telugu poet Vēmana, who satirised the Brāhmans for their shortcomings, and refer to the Sanskrit Mulastambam and Silpasastram, which are treatises on architecture. They trace their descent from Visvakarma, the architect of the gods. Visvakarma is said to have had five sons, of whom the first was Kammarachārya. His wife was Sūrēlavathi, the daughter of Vasishta. The second was Vadlachāryudu. The third was Rūdra or Kamcharāchārya of the Abhavansa gōtra, whose wife was Jalāvathi, the daughter of Paulasthya Brahma. The fourth was Kāsācharyudu of the Prasnasa gōtra. His wife was Gunāvati, the daughter of Visvavasa. The fifth was Agasālāchārya or Chandra of the Suvarnasa gōtra, whose wife was Saunati, the daughter of Bhrigumahāmuni. Visvakarma had also five daughters, of whom Sarasvathi was married to Brahma, Sachi Dēvi to Indra, Mando Dari to Rāvana, and Ahalya to Gautama. Since they were married to the dēvatas, their descendants acquired the title of

Achārya. The use of the umbrella, sacred thread, golden staff, the insignia of Garuda, and the playing of the bhēri were also allowed to them. It is recorded by the Rev. J. Cain * that "the so-called right-hand castes object most strongly to the Kamsalilu being carried in a palki (palanquin), and three years ago some of them threatened to get up a little riot on the occasion of a marriage in the Kamsali caste. They were deprived of this opportunity, for the palki was a borrowed one, and its owner, more anxious for the safety of his property than the dignity of the Kamsali caste, recalled the loan on the third day. A ringleader of the discontented was a Madras Pariah. The Kamsalilu were formerly forbidden to whitewash the outside of their houses, but municipal law has proved stronger in this respect than Brāhmanical prejudice." The Kamsalas of Ganjam and Vizagapatam do not make such a vigorous claim to be Brāhmans, as do those further south. They rear poultry, partake of animal food, do not prohibit the use of alcoholic liquor, and have no gōtras. They also have sub-divisions among them, which do not wear the sacred thread, and work outside the village limits. Thus, the Karamalas are a section of blacksmiths, who do not wear the sacred thread. Similarly, the Baita Kammaras are another section of blacksmiths, who do not wear the thread, and, as their name implies, work outside the village. In Vizagapatam, almost the only castes which will consent to receive food at the hands of Kamsalas are the humble Mālas and Rellis. Even the Tsākalas and Yatas will not do so. There is a popular saying that the Kamsalas are of all castes seven visses (viss, a measure of weight) less.

---

* Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

In 1885, a criminal revision case came before the High Court of Madras, in which a goldsmith performed abishēkam by pouring cocoanut-water over a lingam. In his judgment, one of the Judges recorded that " the facts found are that 1st accused, a goldsmith by caste, on the night of the last Mahāsivarātri, entered a Siva temple at Vizagapatam, and performed abishēkam, *i.e.*, poured cocoanut-water over the lingam, the 2nd and 3rd accused (Brāhmans) reciting mantrams (sacred formulæ) while he did so. Another Brāhman who was there expostulated with 1st accused, telling him that he, a goldsmith, had no right to perform abishēkam himself, upon which 1st accused said that it was he who made the idol, and he was fit to perform abishēkam. An outcry being raised, some other Brāhmans came up, and objected to 1st accused performing abishēkam, and he was turned out, and some ten rupees spent in ceremonies for the purification of the idol. The 2nd-class Magistrate convicted the 1st accused under sections 295 and 296, Indian Penal Code, and the 2nd and 3rd accused of abetment. All these convictions were reversed on appeal by the District Magistrate. There was certainly no evidence that any of the accused voluntarily caused disturbance to an assembly engaged in the performance of religious worship or religious ceremonies, and therefore a conviction under section 296 could not be supported. In order to support a conviction under section 295, it would be necessary for the prosecution to prove (1) that the accused 'defiled' the lingam, and (2) that he did so, knowing that a class of persons, viz., the Brāhmans, would consider such defilement as an insult to their religion. It may be noted that the 1st accused is a person of the same religion as the Brāhmans, and, therefore, if the act be an insult at all, it was an insult to

his own religion. The act of defilement alleged was the performance of abishēkam, or the pouring of cocoanut-water over the lingam. In itself, the act is regarded as an act of worship and meritorious, and I understand that the defilement is alleged to consist in the fact that the 1st accused was not a proper person—not being a Brāhman—to perform such a ceremony, but that he ought to have got some Brāhman to perform it for him." The other Judge (Sir T. Muttusami Aiyar) recorded that "in many temples in this Presidency, it is not usual for worshippers generally to touch the idol or pour cocoanut-water upon it, except through persons who are specially appointed to do so, and enjoined to observe special rules of cleanliness. If the accused knew that the temple, in the case before us, is one of those temples, and if he did the act imputed to him to ridicule openly the established rule in regard to the purity of the lingam as an object of worship, it might then be reasonably inferred that he did the act wantonly, and with the intention of insulting the religious notions of the general body of worshippers. The Sub-Magistrate refers to no specific evidence in regard to the accused's knowledge of the usage. I may also observe that, in certain temples attended by the lower classes, the slaughtering of sheep is an act of worship. But, if the same act is done in other temples to which other classes resort as places of public worship, it is generally regarded as a gross outrage or defilement." The High Court upheld the decision of the District Magistrate.

Each occupational sub-division of the Kamsalas has a headman styled Kulampedda, and occasionally the five headmen assemble for the settlement of some important question of general interest to the community.

A Kamsala may, according to the custom called mēnarikam, claim his maternal uncle's daughter in marriage. The following account of the wedding rites is given in the Nellore Manual. "The relations of the bridegroom first go to the bride's parents or guardians, and ask their consent to the proposed union. If consent is given, a day is fixed, on which relations of the bridegroom go to the bride's house, where all her relations are present with cocoanuts, a cloth for the bride, betel, turmeric, etc. On the same occasion, the amount of the dower is settled. The bride bathes, and is adorned with flowers, turmeric, etc., and puts on the new cloth brought for her, and she receives the articles which the bridegroom's party have brought. On the auspicious day appointed for the marriage, the relations of the bride go to the bridegroom's house, and fetch him in a palanquin. A Brāhman is sent for, who performs the ceremonies near the dais on which the bride and bridegroom are seated. After the recital of the mantras (hymns) before the young couple, he sends for their uncles, and blesses them. The bridegroom then ties a pilgrim's cloth upon him, places a brass water-pot on his head, holds a torn umbrella in his hands, and starts out from the pandal (booth), and says he is going on a pilgrimage to Benares, when the bride's brother runs after him, and promises that he will give his sister in marriage, swearing thrice to this effect. The bridegroom, satisfied with this promise, abandons his pretended journey, takes off his pilgrim cloths, and gives them, with the umbrella, to the Brāhman. The couple seat themselves on the dais, and the Brāhman, having repeated some mantras, gives a sacred thread to the bridegroom to place over his shoulders. He then blesses the mangalasutram (marriage badge corresponding to

the Tamil tāli), and hands it to the bridegroom, who ties it round the bride's neck, his sister or other elderly matron seeing that it is properly tied. The bride's father comes forward, and, placing his daughter's right hand in the bridegroom's right, pours water on them. The other ceremonies are exactly similar to those practiced by the Brāhmans." Girls are invariably married before puberty. Widows are not allowed to remarry, and divorce is not recognised.

The Kamsalas are either Mādhvas, Saivites, or Lingāyats. All revere the caste goddess Kāmākshi Amma, who is represented by each sub-division in a special manner. Thus the Kanchāra represents her by the stone on which he beats his metal work, the goldsmith by one of his implements, and the blacksmith by his bellows. On the eighteenth day of the Dasara festival, an annual festival is celebrated in honour of the goddess.

The dead are buried in a seated posture, but, in recent years, some Kamsalas have taken to cremation. The death rites closely follow the Brāhmanical form. Death pollution is observed for twelve days.

In the Vizagapatam district, some artisans are engaged in the ivory-carving industry. They "manufacture for European clients fancy articles, such as chess-boards, photograph frames, card-cases, trinket boxes, and so on, from tortoise-shell, horn, porcupine quills, and ivory. The industry is in a flourishing state, and has won many medals at exhibitions. It is stated to have been introduced by Mr. Fane, who was Collector of the district from 1859 to 1862, and to have then been developed by the Kamsalis, and men of other castes who eventually took it up. The foundation of the fancy articles is usually sandal-wood, which is imported from

Bombay. Over this are laid porcupine quills split in half and placed side by side, or thin slices of 'bison,' buffalo, or stag horn, tortoise-shell, or ivory. The ivory is sometimes laid over the horn or shell, and is always either cut into geometrical patterns with a small key-hole saw, or etched with designs representing gods and flowers. The etching is done with a small V tool, and then black wax is melted into the design with a tool like a soldering iron, any excess being scraped off with a chisel, and the result is polished with a leaf of *Ficus asperrima* (the leaves of which are very rough, and used as a substitute for sand-paper). This gives a black design (sgraffito) on a white ground. The horn and porcupine quills are obtained from the Agency, and the tortoise-shell and ivory mainly from Bombay through the local Marvaris. The designs employed both in the etching and fret-work are stiff, and suited rather to work in metal than in ivory; and the chief merit of this Vizagapatam work perhaps lies in its careful finish—a rare quality in Indian objects of art. The ivory is rarely carved now, but, in the Calcutta Museum and elsewhere, may be seen samples of the older Vizagapatam work, which often contained ivory panels covered with scenes from holy writ, executed in considerable relief."*

The caste title of the Kamsalas is usually Ayya, but, in recent times, a good many have taken the title Achāri.

The two begging castes Panasa and Runja are stated by Mr. Hemingway to be exclusively devoted to the Kamsalas. "The former," he writes, "are said to be out-castes from the Kōmati sub-division of that name. Formerly in the service of the Nizam, it is said they

* Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district.

were disgraced by him, and driven to accept food of a degrading nature from a Kamsala. The Kamsalas accordingly took them under their protection. The Runjas are said to have been specially created by Siva. Siva had killed a giant named Ravundasura, and the giant's dying request was that his limbs might be turned into musical instruments, and a special caste created to play them at the celebration of Siva's marriage. The Runjas were the caste created. The god ordered Viswakarma, the ancestor of the Kamsalas, to support them, and the Kamsalas say that they have inherited the obligation."

It is recorded, in the Kurnool Manual, that "the story goes that in Golkonda a tribe of Kōmatis named Bacheluvaru were imprisoned for non-payment of arrears of revenue. Finding certain men of the artificer caste, who passed by in the street, spit chewed betel-nut, they got it into their mouths, and begged the artificers to get them released. The artificers pitied them, paid the arrears, and procured their release. It was then that the Kamsalis fixed a vartana or annual house fee for the maintenance of the Panasa class, on condition that they should not beg alms from the other castes."

Kamukham (areca-nut: *Areca Catechu*).—A tree or kothu of Kondaiyamkōttai Maravan.

Kamunchia.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a very small class of Oriya cultivators.

Kānagu (*Pongamia glabra*).—An exogamous sept of Koravas and Thūmati Gollas. The latter may not use the oil obtained from the seeds of this tree. The equivalent Kānagala occurs as an exogamous sept of Kāpu.

Kanaka.—An exogamous sept of Badagas of the Nīlgiris.

Kanakkan.—Kanakkan is a Tamil accountant caste, corresponding to the Oriya Korono. In an account thereof, in the North Arcot Manual, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes that they are "found chiefly in the districts of North Arcot, South Arcot, and Chingleput. The name is derived from the Tamil word kanakku, which means an account. They were employed as village accountants by the ancient kings. In the inscriptions the word Karanam or Kanakkan occurs very often, and their title is invariably given as Vēlān, which is possibly a contracted form of Vellālan. These accountants of the Tamil districts seem to be quite distinct from those of Ganjam and other Telugu provinces (*see* Korono), some of whom claim to be Kshatriyas, or even Brāhmans. It is true that the Karnams themselves claim to be the sons of Brahma, but others maintain that they are the offspring of a Sūdra woman by a Vaisya. The caste is said to have four divisions, Sīr (Srī), Sarattu, Kaikatti, and Sōlia. The Sīr Karnams are considered of highest rank, and are generally the most intelligent accountants, though they are sadly deficient when compared with the Brāhmans who perform the duty of keeping the village accounts above the ghāts. The Kai-katti Karnams (or Karnams who show the hand) derive their name from a peculiar custom existing among them, by which a daughter-in-law is never allowed to speak to her mother-in-law except by signs. The reason may perhaps be surmised. The members of the four divisions cannot intermarry. In their customs the caste is somewhat peculiar. They wear the thread, disallow liquor-drinking, flesh-eating, and widow remarriage. Most of them worship Siva, but there are some who are Vaishnavites, and a very few are Lingāyats." Their title is Pillai. In the records relating to the Tamil country,

Conicopoly, Conicoply, Canacappel, and other variants appear as a corrupt form of Kanakka Pillai. For example, in the records of Fort St. George, 1680, it is noted that "the Governour, accompanyed with the Councell and several persons of the factory, attended by six files of soldyers, the Company's Peons, 300 of the Washers, the Pedda Naigue, the Cancoply of the Towne and of the grounds, went the circuit of Madras ground, which was described by the Cancoply of the grounds." It is recorded by Baldæus (1672) that Xaverius set everywhere teachers called Canacappels.* The title Conicopillay is still applied to the examiner of accounts by the Corporation of Madras.

It is laid down in the Village Officers' Manual that "the Karnam, who is entrusted with the keeping of village accounts, is subordinate to the Head of the village. He should help and advise the Head of the village in every way. He is the clerk of the Head of the village in his capacity of village munsif and magistrate. He has to prepare reports, accounts, statements, etc., which it is necessary to put in writing." When sudden or unnatural death takes place within the limits of a village, the Karnam takes down in writing the evidence of persons who are examined, and frames a report of the whole proceedings. He keeps the register of those who are confined, or placed in the stocks by the Head of the village for offences of a trivial nature, such as using abusive language, or petty assaults or affrays. It is the Karnam who keeps the revenue accounts, and registers of the price of all kinds of grain, strangers passing or re-passing through the village, births and deaths, and cattle mortality when cattle disease, *e.g.*, anthrax or

---

* Yule and Burnell, Hobson-Jobson.

rinderpest, exists. Further, it is the duty of the Karnam to take proper care of Government survey instruments, and, when revenue survey is being carried out, to satisfy himself that the village and field boundary marks are properly erected.

In their marriage and death ceremonies, the Kanakkans closely follow the Tamil Purānic type as observed by Vellālas. The Kaikatti section, however, has one peculiar custom. After the marriage ceremony, the girl is kept inside the house, and not allowed to move about freely, for at least two or three days. She is considered to be under some kind of pollution. It is said that, in former times, she was confined in the house for forty days, and, as occupation, had to separate dhal (peas) and rice, which had been mixed together.

The following proverbs are not complimentary to the Kanakkan, who, as an influential village official, is not always a popular individual :—

Though babies are sold for a pie each, we do not want a Kanakka baby.

Wherever you meet with a Kanakka child or with a crow's young one, put out its eyes.

In Travancore, Kanakkan is a name by which Kammālans are addressed, and a prefix to the name of Todupūzha Vellālas. It further occurs, on the west coast, as a sub-division of Cheruman or Pulayan.

For the following note on the Kanakkans of the Cochin State, I am indebted to Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Aiyar.*

The Kanakkans belong to the slave castes, and are even now attached to some landlords. In the tāluks of Trichūr, Mukandapuram, and Cranganūr, where I

---

* Monograph, Eth. Survey of Cochin, No. 4, 1905.

obtained all my information about them, I learnt that they are the Atiyars (slaves) of Chittūr Manakkal Nambūdiripad at Perumanom near Trichūr, and they owe him a kind of allegiance. The Nambūdiri landlord told me that the members of the caste, not only from almost all parts of the State, but also from the British tāluks of Ponnāni, Chowghat, and even from Calicut, come to him with a Thirumulkazhcha, *i.e.*, a few annas in token of their allegiance. This fact was also confirmed by a Kanakkanar (headman) at Cranganūr, who told me that he and his castemen were the slaves of the same landlord, though, in disputes connected with the caste, they abide by the decision of the local Rāja. In the event of illness or calamity in the family of a Kanakkan, an astrologer (Kaniyan), who is consulted as to the cause and remedy, sometimes reminds the members thereof of the negligence in their allegiance to the landlord, and suggests the advisability of paying respects to him (Nambikuru) with a few annas. On the Puyam day in Makaram (January-February), these people from various parts of the State present themselves in a body with a few annas each, to own their allegiance to him. The following story is mentioned by him. One of his ancestors chanced to pay his respects to one of the rulers of the State, when the residence of the Royal Family was in Cochin. On arriving near the town, the boat capsised in a storm, but was luckily saved by the bravery of a few rowers of this caste. The Rāja, who witnessed the incident from a window of his palace, admired their valour, and desired to enlist some Kanakkans into his service.

There are four endogamous sub-divisions among the Kanakkans, viz., Patunna, the members of which formerly worked in salt-pans, Vettuva, Chavala, and

Parāttu. Each of these is further sub-divided into clans (kiriyam), which are exogamous.

A young man may marry the daughter of his maternal uncle, but this is not permissible in some places. Marriage is both infant and adult, and may be celebrated by Patunna Kanakkans at any time between the tenth and thirteenth years of a girl, while the Vettuva Kanakkans may celebrate it only after girls attain puberty. They often choose the bridegroom beforehand, with the intention of performing the ceremony after puberty.

When a girl attains maturity, she is kept apart in a part of the house on the score of pollution, which lasts for seven days. She bathes on the fourth day. On the morning of the seventh day seven girls are invited, and they accompany the girl to a tank (pond) or a river. They all have an oil bath, after which they return home. The girl, dressed and adorned in her best, is seated on a plank in a conspicuous part of the hut, or in a pandal (booth) put up for the time in front of it. A small vessel full of paddy * (nerapara), a cocoanut, and a lighted lamp, are placed in front of her. Her Enangan begins his musical tunes, and continues for an hour or two, after which he takes for himself the above things, while his wife, who has purified the girl by sprinkling cow-dung water, gets a few annas for her service. It is now, at the lucky moment, that the girl's mother ties the tāli round her neck. The seven girls are fed, and given an anna each. The relations, and other castemen who are invited, are treated to a sumptuous dinner. The guests as they depart give a few annas each to the chief host, to meet the expenses of the ceremony and the feast. This old custom of mutual help prevails largely among

* Unhusked rice.

the Pulayas also. The girl is now privileged to enter the kitchen, and discharge her domestic duties. The parents of the bridegroom contribute to the ceremony a small packet of jaggery (crude sugar), a muri (piece of cloth), some oil and incha (*Acacia Intsia*), the soft fibre of which is used as soap. This contribution is called bhendu nyayam. If the girl is married before puberty, and she attains her maturity during her stay with her husband, the ceremony is performed in his hut, and the expenses are met by the parents of the bridegroom, while those of the bride contribute a share.

When a Vettuva Kanakka girl comes of age, the headman (Vatikāran) of the caste is informed. He comes, along with his wife, to help the girl's parents in the performance of the ceremony. Seven girls are invited. Each of them breaks a cocoanut, and pours the water on the girl's head. Water is also poured over her. As soon as she is thus bathed, she is allowed to remain in a room, or in a part of the hut. Near her are placed a mirror made of metal, a vessel of paddy, a pot full of water, and a lighted lamp. The young man who has been chosen as her husband is invited. He has to climb a cocoanut tree to pluck a tender cocoanut for the girl, and a cluster of flowers. He then takes a meal in the girl's hut, and departs. The same proceedings are repeated on the fourth day, and, on the seventh day, he takes the cluster of flowers, and throws it on water.

As soon as a young man is sufficiently old, his parents look out for a girl as his wife. When she is chosen, the negociations leading to marriage are opened by the father of the bridegroom, who, along with his brother-in-law and Enangan (relations by marriage), goes to the house of the bride-elect, where, in the midst of relations and friends previously assembled,

the formal arrangements are made, and a portion of the bride's money is also paid. The auspicious day for the wedding is settled, and the number of guests to be invited is fixed. There is also an entertainment for those that are assembled. A similar one is also held at the hut of the bridegroom-elect. These people are too poor to consult the local Kaniyan (astrologer); but, if it is known that the couple were born on the day of the same constellation, the match is at once rejected. On the day chosen for the celebration of the marriage, the bridegroom, neatly dressed, and with a knife and stylus, sets out from his hut, accompanied by his parents, uncles, other relatives, and men of his village, to the hut of the bride, where they are welcomed, and seated on mats in a pandal (booth) put up for the occasion. The bride, somewhat veiled, is taken to the pandal and seated along with the bridegroom, and to both of them a sweet preparation of milk, sugar and plantain fruits is given, to establish the fact that they have become husband and wife. There is no tāli-tying then. The guests are treated to a sumptuous dinner. As they take leave of the chief host, each of them pays a few annas to meet the expenses of the ceremony. The bridegroom, with the bride and those who have accompanied him, returns to his hut, where some ceremonies are gone through, and the guests are well fed. The bridegroom and bride are seated together, and a sweet preparation is given, after which the parents and the maternal uncle of the former, touching the heads of both, says "My son, my daughter, my nephew, my niece," meaning that the bride has become a member of their family. They throw rice on their heads as a token of their blessings on them. After this, the couple live together as man and wife. In some places, marriage is performed by proxy.

A young Vettuva Kanakkan cannot marry by proxy. Neither can the tāli-tying ceremony be dispensed with.

If a woman has abandoned herself to a member of a lower caste, she is put out of caste, and becomes a Christian or Muhammadan. Adultery is regarded with abhorrence. All minor offences are dealt with by the headman, whose privileges are embodied in a Thīturam (royal order), according to which he may preside at marriage, funeral, and other ceremonies, and obtain a small fee as remuneration for his services. He may use a stick, a stylus, and a knife lined with gold. He may wear a white coat, turban and ear-rings, and use an umbrella. He may also construct a shed with six posts for marriage ceremonies. He has to pay a tax of ten annas to the Sirkar (Government). Chittūr Manakkal Nambūdiripad in the tāluk of Talapilly, the Cranganūr Rāja in the tāluk of Cranganūr, and His Highness the Maharāja exercise absolute powers in the settlement of disputes connected with this and other castes.

The Kanakkans believe in magic, sorcery, and witchcraft. Persons who practice the art are very rare among them. They go to a Pānan, Vēlan, or Parayan, whenever they require his services. They profess Hinduism, and worship Siva, Vishnu, Ganapathi, and Subramania, Mūkkan, Chāthan, Kandakaranan, and the spirits of their ancestors are also adored. Vettuva Kanakkans do homage to Kappiri and Vīrabhadran also. Chāthan cannot be worshipped at Cranganūr, as he is opposed to the local deity. Wooden or brass images of their ancestors are kept in their huts, to whom regular sacrifices are offered on Karkadagom, Thulam, and Makaram Sankranthis. In their compounds is often seen a raised platform beneath a tree, on which are placed a few stones representing the images of the

demons whom they much fear and respect. Sacrifices are offered to them on leaves.

Patunna Kanakkans invariably bury their dead. The funeral rites are similar to those observed by other low castes. Death pollution lasts for fifteen days. On the sixteenth morning, the hut and compound are swept and cow-dunged. The relatives and castemen are invited, and bring some rice and curry stuffs for a feast. Along with the chief mourner (the son of the deceased) and his brothers, they go to the nearest tank or river to bathe. The Enangan of the family purifies them by the sprinkling of cow-dung water. They return home, and those assembled are treated to a grand dinner. The son observes the diksha (mourning) either for forty-one days, or for a whole year, after which a grand feast called Masam is celebrated.

The Kanakkans are employed in fishing in the backwaters, cutting timber and floating it on bamboo rafts down rivers flooded during the monsoon, boating, pumping out water from rice fields by means of water-wheels, and all kinds of agricultural labour. They were at one time solely engaged in the manufacture of salt from the backwaters. Women are engaged in making coir (cocoanut fibre) and in agricultural labour. Vettuva Kanakkans are engaged in cocoanut cultivating, and making lime out of shells. They are very skilful in climbing cocoanut trees for plucking cocoanuts.

The Kanakkans take food prepared by members of the higher castes, and by Kammālans, Izhuvas, and Māppillas. They have a strong objection to eating at the hands of Veluthēdans (washermen), Velakka-thalavans (barbers), Pānans, Vēlans, and Kaniyans. Pulayas, Ulladans, and Nayādis have to stand far away

from them. They themselves have to keep at a distance of 48 feet from high caste Hindus. They pollute Izhuvas by touch, and Kammālans and Valans at a short distance. They cannot approach the temples of the higher castes, but take part in the festivals of temples in rural parts. At Cranganūr, they can come as far as the kozhikallu, which is a stone outside the temple at a short distance from it, on which fowls are offered by low caste people.

Kanakku.—A prefix to the name of Nāyars, *e.g.*, Kanakku Rāman Krishnan, and also adopted as a prefix by the Todupuzha Vellālas of Travancore.

Kanchāran.—A Malabar caste, the occupation of which is the manufacture of brass vessels.

Kanchēra.—Kanchēra and Kanchāri are names of the Telugu section of metal-workers.

Kānchimandalam Vellāla.—A name assumed by Malaiyālis of the Salem hills, who claim to be Vellālas who emigrated from Conjeeveram (Kānchipūram).

Kanchu (bell-metal).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba. Kansukejje (bronze bell) occurs as a sub-division of Toreya.

Kanchugāra.—In the Madras and Mysore Census Reports, Kanchugāra is recorded as a sub-division of Panchāla, the members of which are workers in brass, copper, and bell-metal. The Kanchugāras of South Canara are described by Mr. H. A. Stuart * as "a Canarese caste of brass-workers. They are Hindus of the Vaishnava sect, and pay special reverence to Venkatrāmana of Tirupati. Their spiritual guru is the head of the Rāmachandrapuram math. A man cannot marry within his own gōtra or family. They have the ordinary

* Manual of the South Canara district.

system of inheritance through males. Girls must be married before puberty, and the dhāre form of marriage (*see* Bant) is used. The marriage of widows is not permitted, and divorce is allowed only in the case of women who have proved unchaste. The dead are either cremated, or buried in a recumbent posture. Brāhmans officiate as their priests. The use of spirituous liquors, and flesh and fish is permitted. Bell-metal is largely used for making household utensils, such as lamps, goglets, basins, jugs, etc. The process of manufacturing these articles is as follows. The moulds are made of clay, dried and coated with wax to the thickness of the articles required, and left to dry again, a hole being made in them so as to allow the wax to flow out when heated. After this has been done, the molten metal is poured in. The moulds are then broken, and the articles taken out and polished."

Kandappan.—A sub-division of Ōcchan.

Kandulu (dāl : *Cajanus indicus*).—An exogamous sept of Yerukala. Kandikattu (dāl soup) occurs as an exogamous sept of Mēdara.

Kangara.—The word Kangara means servant, and the Kangaras (or Khongars) were orginally village watchmen in the Vizagapatam Agency tracts, corresponding to the Kāvalgars of the Tamil country. They are described as follows by Lieutenant J. Macdonald Smith, who was Assistant Agent to the Governor in Jeypore in the sixties of the last century. "A Khongar, it seems, is nothing but a Kāvilgar or village watchman. That these people, in many parts of India, are little better than a community of thieves, is pretty well known, and what was the true nature of the system in Jeypore was very clearly brought to light in a case which was committed to my Court. It was simply this. Before

we entered the country, the entire police and magisterial authority of a tāluk was lodged in the revenue ameen or renter. Whenever a theft occurred, and the property was of sufficient importance to warrant the trouble and expense, the traveller or householder, as the case might be, resorted at once to the ameen, who (if sufficiently feed by the complainant) forthwith sent for the Head Khongar of the quarter, and desired him to recover the goods, whatever they might be. The Khongar generally knows very well where to lay his hand on the property, and would come back with such portion of it as the urgency of the ameen's order seemed to require, while the zeal of that functionary of course varied in each case, according to the extent of the gratification the complainant seemed disposed to give. This is the Khongar system of Jeypore in its length and breadth, as proved at the trial referred to. Wherever a tāluk is taken up by the Police, the system of course falls down of itself. As for the Khongars, they willingly enlist in our village constabulary, and are proving themselves both intelligent and fearless." The Meriah Officers (1845–61) remarked that the former Rājas of Jeypore, and their subordinate chiefs, retained in their service great numbers of professional robbers, called Khongars, whom they employed within the Jeypore country, and in the plains, on expeditions of rapine and bloodshed.

The Khongars were generally Paidis by caste, and their descendants are even now the most notorious among the dacoits of the Vizagapatam district. Their methods are thus described in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district (1907). "Like the Konda Doras, they have induced some of the people to employ watchmen of their caste as the price of immunity from theft.

They are connected with the Dombus of the Rāyagada and Gunupur tāluks, who are even worse. These people dacoit houses at night in armed gangs of fifty or more, with their faces blackened to prevent recognition. Terrifying the villagers into staying quiet in their huts, they force their way into the house of some wealthy person (for choice the local Sondi, liquor-seller and sowcar *—usually the only man worth looting in an Agency village, and a shark who gets little pity from his neighbours when forced to disgorge), tie up the men, rape the women, and go off with everything of value. Their favourite method of extracting information regarding concealed property is to sprinkle the house-owner with boiling oil."

Kangayan.—A division of Idaiyans settled in Travancore.

Kāniāla (land-owners).—A sub-division of Vellāla.

Kanigiri (a hill in the Nellore district).—An exogamous sept of Mēdara.

Kānikar.—The Kānikars, who are commonly known as Kānis, are a jungle tribe inhabiting the mountains of South Travancore. Till recently they were in the habit of sending all their women into the seclusion of the dense jungle on the arrival of a stranger near their settlements. But this is now seldom done, and some Kānikars have in modern times settled in the vicinity of towns, and become domesticated. The primitive short, dark-skinned and platyrhine type, though surviving, has become changed as the result of contact metamorphosis, and many leptorhine or mesorhine individuals above middle height are to be met with.

---

* Money-lender.

—	Stature.			Nasal index.		
	AV.	MAX.	MIN.	AV.	MAX.	MIN.
Jungle	155·2	170·3	150·2	84·6	105	72·3
Domesticated	158·7	170·4	148	81·2	90·5	70·8

The Kānikars are said to be characterised by a high standard of honour, and to be straightforward, honest and truthful. They are good trackers and fond of sport, and in clearing forest paths they have hardly any equals. Their help and guidance are sought by, and willingly given to any person who may have to travel through the forests.

The jungle Kānikars have no permanent abode, but shift about from one part of the forest to another. Their settlements, composed of lowly huts built of bamboo and reeds, are abandoned when they suffer from fever, or are harassed by wild beasts, or when the soil ceases to be productive. The settlements are generally situated, away from the tracks of elephants, on steep hill slopes, which are terraced and planted with useful trees. In their system of cultivation the Kānikars first clear a patch of forest, and then set fire to it. The ground is sown with hardly any previous tillage. When, after two or three years, the land diminishes in productiveness, they move on to another part of the forest, and follow the same rough and ready method of cultivation. Thus one patch of ground after another is used for agricultural purposes, until a whole tract of forest is cleared. But the Kānikars have now to a large extent abandoned this kind of migratory cultivation, because, according to the forest rules, forests may not be set fire to or trees felled at the unrestricted pleasure of individuals. They cultivate various kinds of cereals and pulses, as well as tapioca

(*Manihot utilissima*), sweet potatoes (*Ipomœa batatas*), ganja (Indian hemp), and tobacco. Each settlement now has a forest block assigned to it for cultivation, with which other tribes are not allowed to interfere, and wherein the Kānikars are allowed to fell, clear, and grow their crops. They do not pay anything in the way of tax to the Government. Once a year they go in a group to visit the Mahārāja at Trivandrum, and he "always receives them most kindly, accepting the nuzzur they offer in the shape of the bamboo plantain with large though few fruits, a parcel of Muttucheri hill rice, bamboo joints containing different varieties of honey, and virukachattam or a parcel of civet. The customary modes of court address, and the prescribed court etiquette are alike unknown to them, and the Mahārāja, pleased with their simplicity and unaffected homage, rewards them with presents of cloth, money, salt, and tobacco, with which they return satisfied to their jungle home." The Rev. S. Mateer notes that he had difficulty in persuading the Kānikars to part with a sucker of the bamboo plantain, as they fancied it must be reserved for the use of the Mahārāja alone.

Some Kānikars are engaged as coolies on planters' estates, or in felling timber and cutting bamboos for contractors, others in the manufacture of bows and arrows with blunt or barbed iron heads. Heated arrows are used by them, for hitting elephants which invade their sugar-cane or other crop, from the safe protection of a hut built on a platform of sticks in tall trees of branches or bamboo covered with leaves of *Ochlandra Travancorica* or other large leaves. In connection with these huts, which are called ānamadam (elephant huts), it has been said that "the hills abound with game. 'Bison' (*Bos gaurus*), bears, and sāmbar (*Cervus unicolor*)

are frequently met with, while elephants and tigers are so numerous that the Kānikars are in some parts compelled to build their houses high up in trees. These primitive houses are quickly and easily constructed. The walls are made of bamboo, and the roof is thatched with jungle leaves. They are generally built about fifty feet above the ground, and are securely fastened to the branches of a substantial tree, and a crude ladder of bamboo connects them with the ground. When all the inmates are safely housed for the night, the ladder is removed aloft out of the reach of elephants, who, mischievously inclined, might remove the obstruction, and leave the Kānikars to regain terra firma the best way they could." Sometimes a single bamboo, with the shoots on the sides cut short, does duty for a ladder. It has been said that, when the crops are ripening, the Kānikar watchmen are always at home in their arboreal houses, with their bows and arrows, and chanting their wild songs. Sometimes the blunt end of an arrow is used as a twirling stick in making fire by friction, for which purpose sticks made of *Grewia tiliæfolia*, etc., are also used. In making fire, the Kānikars "procure two pieces of wood, one of which is soft, and contains a small hole or hollow about half an inch deep to receive the end of the other, which is a hard round stick about eighteen inches long, and as thick as an ordinary ruler. The Kānikar takes this stick between the palms of his hands, keeping it in a vertical position, with the end of it in the hollow referred to, and produces a quick rotary and reverse motion, and with slight pressure causes the friction necessary to produce a quantity of fluff, which soon ignites."

The Kānikars are employed by the Government to collect honey, wax, ginger, cardamoms, dammar, and

elephant tusks, in return for a small remuneration known as kutivāram. Other occupations are trapping, capturing or killing elephants, tigers, and wild pigs, and making wicker-work articles of bamboo or rattan. The Rev. S. Mateer mentions having seen a wicker bridge, perhaps a hundred feet long, over which a pony could pass. A tiger trap is said to be a huge affair made of strong wooden bars, with a partition at one end for a live goat as bait. The timbers thereof are supported by a spring, which, on a wild beast entering, lets fall a crushing weight on it.

The Kānikars wander all over the hills in search of honey, and a resident in Travancore writes that "I have seen a high rugged rock, only accessible on one side, the other side being a sheer precipice of several hundred feet, and in its deep crevices scores of bees' nests. Some of them have been there for generations, and the Kānikars perform periodically most daring feats in endeavouring to secure at least a portion of the honey. On this precipice I have seen overhanging and fluttering in the breeze a rattan rope, made in rings and strongly linked together, the whole forming a rope ladder several hundred feet long, and securely fastened to a tree at the top of the precipice. Only a short time ago these people made one of their usual raids on the 'honey rock.' One of the tribe descended the rope ladder for a considerable distance, with a basket fastened to his back to receive the honey, and carrying with him torch-wood with which to smoke the bees out of the nests. Having arrived at his goal two hundred feet from the top, and over three hundred feet from the ground below, he ignited the torch, and, after the usual smoking process, which took some little time to perform, the bees made a hurried exit from the nests, and the Kānikar began the

work of destruction, and with every movement the man and the ladder swayed to and fro, as if the whole thing would collapse at any moment. However, all was safe, and, after securing as much honey as he could conveniently carry, he began the return journey. Hand and foot he went up ring after ring until he reached the top in safety, performing the ascent with an air of nonchalant ease, which would have done credit to any steeple jack." The honey is brought for sale in hollow bamboo joints.

Sometimes Kānikars come into Trivandrum, bringing with them live animals for the zoological gardens.

The word Kānikaran means a hereditary proprietor of land. There is a tradition that there were once two hill kings, Srī Rangan and Vīrappan, whose descendants emigrated from the Pāndyan territories beyond Agastyakūtam under pressure from a superior force, and never returned to the low country. The following legend is current among the Kānikars. "The sea originally covered everything, but God caused the water to roll back, and leave bare all the hills. Then Paramēswara and Parvati made a man and woman, whose descendants were divided into fifty-six races, and multiplied exceedingly, so that a sore famine invaded the land. In those days men were hunters, and lived by snaring animals and plucking wild fruits off the trees. There was no corn, for men did not know how to sow rice, and cultivate it. The cry of the famine-stricken reached Paramēswara and Parvati, and they visited the earth in the form of a pair of hamsam (the bird which carries Brahma), and alighted on a kanjiram tree. While seated there, the god and goddess noticed a pair of dragon-flies, which paired together, and they too, their hearts swelling with love, embraced each other, and, taking pity on mankind,

willed that a field of rice should sprout on the low-lying land near the sea-shore. The Paraiyans and Pulayans, who witnessed the rice growing, were the first to taste of the crop, and became prosperous. This was in Malabar, or the far north of Travancore. The Mahārāja, hearing of the new grain, sent seven green parrots to go on a journey of discovery, and they returned with seven ears of rice. These the Mahārāja placed in a granary, and gave some to the Paraiyans to sow, and the grain miraculously increased. But the Mahārāja wanted to know how it was to be cooked. The parrots were accordingly once more brought into requisition, and they flew away, and brought back eighteen varieties of cooked rice which a Paraiyan's wife had prepared. Then the Mahārāja, having got some rice prepared by his cooks, fell to and eat heartily. After eating, he went into the yard to wash his hands, and, before drying them on a cloth, wrung his right hand to get the last drops of water off. A valuable gold ring with three stones fell therefrom, and, burying itself in the dust, was never recovered. The Mahārāja was sore distressed by his loss, but, Paramēswara, as some recompense, caused to grow from the ground where the ring fell three trees which are very valuable in Travancore, and which, by the sale of their produce, would make the Mahārāja wealthy and prosperous. The trees were the dammar tree, the resinous gum of which is useful in religious ceremonies, the sandal-wood tree so widely used for its perfume, and lastly the bamboo, which is so useful and necessary to the well-being of the Kānikars."

The sub-divisions among the Kānikars are known as illams or families, of which five are said to be endogamous, and five exogamous. The former are called Machchampi or brother-in-law illams, and the latter



KĀNIKARS MAKING FIRE.

Annantampi or brother illams. They are named after mountains (*e.g.*, Pālamala, Talamala), places (*e.g.*, Vellanāt), etc. The Kānikars who live south of the Kodayar river cannot marry those living north of it, the river forming a marital boundary.

Among the names of Kānikars are Parapan (broad-faced), Chanthiran (moon), Marthandan (sun), Muntan (dwarf), Kāliyan (little Kāli), Mādan (a deity), Nīli (blue) and Karumpi (black). The first name is sometimes that of the settlement in which they live. For example, the various Mullans are known as Kuzhumbi Mullan, Ānaimalai Mullan, Chembilakayam Mullan, etc.

The Kānikars live together in small communities under a Mūttakāni or headman, who wields considerable influence over them, and enjoys various perquisites. He presides over tribal council meetings, at which all social questions are discussed and settled, and fixes the time for clearing the jungle, sowing the seed, gathering the harvest, worshipping the gods, etc. Fines which are inflicted are spent in propitiating the gods.

The language of the Kānikars is a dialect of Malayālam, with a large admixture of Tamil, which they call Malampāshai or language of the hills.

The system of inheritance among those who live in the hills is makkathāyam (from father to son). But a moiety of the personal property goes to the nephews. With those who live in the plains, an equal distribution of their self-acquired property is made between the sons and nephews. If there are no sons, the nephews inherit the property, the widow being entitled to maintenance.

The chief object of worship is said to be Sāsthan, a forest god. But the Kānikars also make offerings to a variety of deities, including Amman, Poothathan, Vetikād Pootham, Vadamala Poothathan, and Amcala.

They have, it has been said, "certain spots, trees or rocks, where their relations or friends have met with some unusual good luck or calamity, where they generally offer their prayers. Here they periodically assemble, and pray that the catastrophe that had befallen a comrade may not fall on them, or that the blessings which another had received may be showered on them." Generally in February a festival called kodai is held, whereat the Kānikars assemble. Goats and fowls are sacrificed, and the pūjāri (priest) offers boiled rice and meat to the sylvan deities in a consecrated place. The festival, to which many come from the low country, winds up with drinking and dancing. The Kānikar musical instruments include a reed flute or clarionet, and men dance to the music, while the women clap their hands in time with it. The Kānikars worship their gods twice a year, in the months of Mīnam and Kanni. On the morning of the celebration, every family takes rice and plantains to the dwelling of the headman. With the exception of a small quantity which is set aside, the rice is husked and ground to flour by boys or men, after bathing and washing their hands and feet. The rice is taken to a clearing in the fields, whither a Kānikar who knows how to invoke the deity comes after bathing. He lays out a row of plantain leaves, and spreads on each leaf a little rice, on which plantains are laid. These are covered over with a plantain leaf, on which rice is sprinkled. The officiating Kānikar then burns incense, carries it round the trophy, and places it in front thereof. All do obeisance by raising their hands to their foreheads, and pray for a fruitful harvest. Sometimes the officiating Kānikar becomes inspired like a Velichapād, and gives expression to oracular utterances. At the close of the ceremony, a

distribution of the rice and plantains takes place. When the land is to be cleared for cultivation, the headman is invited to attend, and some rice and cocoanuts are presented to him, which he offers up, and clears a small portion with his own hand. On the first appearance of the ears of grain, the Kānikars spend two nights in drumming, singing, and repeating mantrams at the field, and put up a tattu or platform on four sticks as a shrine for the spirits, to whom they offer raw rice, tender cocoanuts, flowers, etc. At harvest time rice, plantains, sweetmeats, and flowers are offered to the various hill demons, Pūrcha Mallan Pey, the cat giant, Athirakodi Pey, the boundary flag demon, and others.

For the following note on a Kānikar harvest festival I am indebted to an article by Mr. A. P. Smith.* It was performed in propitiation of the Baradēvata, or household gods of a house in the neighbourhood, the presiding deity being Mādan. The ceremony is commonly called the feeding ceremony, and should be carried out just before the harvesting of the grain commences. "The officiating Kāni is generally an elderly and influential man, who professes inspiration and knowledge obtained when asleep. The articles necessary to perform the ceremony are called Paduka or sacrifice, and Ashtamangalyam. Paduka is for the adult gods or manes, male or female, called Chava, and Ashtamangalyam is for the virgins who have died, called Kanyakas. A temporary pavilion or pandal had been erected in front of the house, and from the canopy long streamers of tender cocoanut leaves, bunches of plantains, and tender cocoanuts, with their husk on, were hung. Branches of areca nuts and flowers adorned the posts

* Malabar Quarterly Review, 1905.

and pillars. Small heaps, consisting of boiled rice, paddy, a tender cocoanut, a sprig of areca flowers, and betel were placed on plantain leaves in seven definite spots. The officiating Kānikar, after formally getting the permission of the assembled spectators, and especially of one who subsequently appeared on the scene as the chief dancer, began a monotonous chant in what appeared to be a mixed language. It was understood to be a history of the beginning of earthly kings, a record of the life and doings of departed souls, whose protection was prayed for, and a prayer for the souls of those persons for whose benefit the ceremony of propitiation was in progress. Now and again the feelings of the narrator or singer would overcome him, and he would indulge in a shout or in emphatic gesticulations. This went on for about three or four hours, punctuated at intervals by the firing of petards or old smooth-bore guns, and the shrill cries of the women. Before the chanting terminated, a large heap of the red flowers of *Ixora coccinca* (thetti pu), about a yard square at the base, had been raised in the centre of the pandal, and it was prettily picked out with areca flowers in artistic designs. The horrible sound of a human voice roaring like a wild beast aroused every one to a sense of activity. From behind the hut came the man already mentioned, very primitively clothed, his hair hanging loose, his eyes staring, and what appeared like foam at his mouth. He would stand, run short distances, leap, sit, agitate his body, and dance, keeping step to the rhythmic and muffled beating of the drum. This he did for ten minutes or so. Suddenly, with a shout, he dived into the hut specially set apart as the feeding place of the god Mādan, and presently appeared with two long sticks adorned at their ends with bells,

which emitted a jingling sound. The frenzy of motion, ecstatic, unregulated and ungovernable, was apparently infectious, for a young man, hitherto a silent spectator of the scene, gave a shout, and began to dance wildly, throwing up his arms, and stepping out quite actively. This encouragement stimulated the original performer, and he caught a man standing near by the neck, thrust the stick with the bells into his hand, and he thereupon started dancing as well. In about ten minutes there were some half a dozen wild dancing dervishes, shouting, gesticulating, revolving, and most certainly in an abnormal state of excitement. A dying but still glowing heap of fire and ashes became the centre of attraction, for the chief dancer danced over the fire, and sent the sparks flying, and scattered the wood, and evoked the admiration and eulogies of the crowd. Streaming with perspiration, spotted with ashes, wild, dishevelled and exhausted, the chief dancing demoniac stepped under the pandal, and finally sat himself before the heap of red flowers, and tossed the blossoms over his head in a kind of shower bath. He was assisted in this by the old Kānikar and other bystanders. A little boy was brought before him, and he called the lad by a name. This was his christening ceremony, for the lad assumed the name from that time. The chief dancer then stood up, and appeared to be still in a possessed state. A fine old rooster was brought, and its throat cut. It was then handed to the dancer, who applied his lips to the gaping wound, and drained the blood, swallowing the fluid audibly. Before relinquishing his hold of the bird, he swayed and fell on the ground in what seemed to be a swoon. This indicated that the sacrifice had been acceptable, that the propitiation was perfected, and that all the wishes of the persons interested in them would

be granted. The crowd then set to eating and drinking the sacrificial elements, and dispersed."

Both adult and infant marriage are practiced. Those who had married 'infants,' on being questioned, stated that this is the safest course, as grown-up brides sometimes run away to their parents' house, whereas younger girls get accustomed to their husbands' home. On a fixed day, within a month of the marriage ceremony, four Kānikars, accompanied by a boy carrying betel leaves and areca nuts, go to the home of the future bride, and present them to the families of the settlement. On the wedding morning, all assemble at a pandal (booth), and the bridegroom distributes pān-supāri (betel leaf and areca nuts). His sister then brings forward the bride, and the bridegroom presents her with a cloth, which she puts on. Bride, bridegroom, and a young boy, then stand on a mat beneath the pandal, and the bridegroom ties the minnu (marriage badge) round the neck of the bride if she is an infant. If she is an adult, he places the minnu in front of her neck, on which it is tied by his sister. A plantain leaf is then placed in front of the bridal couple, and curry and rice served thereon by their mothers. The two women then take hold of the bride's head, and press it seven times towards her husband's shoulders. This ceremony concluded, the young boy takes a small quantity of the curry and rice, and puts it in the mouth of the bridegroom seven times. The bridegroom's younger brother then gives a morsel to the bride. The ceremonial terminates with a feast. The dowry includes billhooks, brass vessels, choppers, grain, and pulses. The headman, according to Mateer, offers some advice to the husband concerning the management of his wife. The heads of his discourse are arranged under the following heads:—teaching by

words, pinching, and blows, and casting the woman away at last, if she is not obedient. In the remarriage of widows, the bridegroom simply gives the woman a pair of cloths, and, with the consent of the male members of her family, takes her to his home.

During the seventh month of pregnancy, a woman has to perform a ceremony called vaguthu pongal. Seven pots are placed on seven hearths, and, when the rice placed therein has boiled, the woman salutes it, and all present partake thereof. According to Mateer "the ceremony practised on the occasion of pregnancy is called vayaru pongal, when boiled rice is offered to the sun. First they mould an image of Ganēsha, and, setting it in a suitable place, boil the rice. To this they add for an offering aval or flattened rice, parched rice, cakes, plantain fruits, young cocoanuts, and tender leaves of the same palm, with the flowers of the areca palm. The headman then commences dancing, and repeating mantrams. He waves the offerings to the sun. On first giving rice to a child, a feast is held, and an offering presented to the jungle demons."

Concerning the death ceremonies, Mateer writes that "when any one is taken ill, the headman is at once consulted. He visits the sick person, and orders two drumming and singing ceremonies to be performed. A whole night is spent in dancing, singing, drumming, and prayers for the recovery of the patient. The offerings consist of tapioca, flour and cocoanuts, and other articles. After some time the headman, with manifestations of demoniac possession, reveals whether the sufferer will die or not. If the former, he repeats a mantram (kudumi vettu mantram, or formula on cutting off the top-knot), and cuts off the sick man's kudumi. This being a sign of approaching death, the relatives and others pay their

last visits to the sick. After death, a mixture of ganja (Indian hemp), raw rice, and cocoanut, is put into the mouth of the corpse by the son and nephews, and it is buried at some distance from their abode, mantrams being repeated over it. Occasionally the corpse is cremated. The relatives bathe before returning home, and cannot take any of the produce of their lands till the death pollution is removed, fearing that wild beasts will attack them or destroy their crops. To this end a small shed is built outside their clearing on the third day. Three measures of rice are boiled, and placed in a cup or on a plantain leaf inside the shed. Then all bathe, and return home. On the seventh day all this is repeated, the old shed being pulled down, and a new one put up. On returning to their dwelling, they sprinkle cow-dung on their houses and in the yard, which finally removes the defilement. People in better circumstances make a feast of curry and rice for all present." The cow-dung is sprinkled with leafy twigs of the mango or jāk tree, or flower stalks of the areca palm. The ashes, after cremation, are said to be collected in a pot or leaf, and thrown into the nearest stream or river. An annual ceremony, in commemoration of ancestors, is held, at which rice is boiled and offered up.

The Kānikars, like the Irulas and Yānādis of the Tamil and Telugu countries, do not belong to the polluting classes. Pulayans, Kuruvans, and Vēdans are not allowed to approach them.

The dietary of the jungle Kānikars includes wild pigs, deer, porcupines, hares, monkeys, fowls, sheep and goats, parakeets, doves, tortoises, fish, crabs, peacocks, tigers (said to taste like black monkey), owls, squirrels and field rats, in addition to many vegetable products of the forest. They will not eat beef or the flesh of 'bison.'



KĀNIKAR.

Some Kānikars are tattooed on the forehead with a crescent and dot, or a vertical stripe. The Kānikars say that their ancestors wore a garment made of jungle fibre, which has been replaced by a cotton loin-cloth. "Both men and women," Mr. M. Ratnaswami Aiyar writes, "wear on the neck numerous strings of red beads and rings made of shells, which hang down to the abdomen in the case of the women. The men wear ear-rings of brass or silver. The women wear bangles of brass and iron, and a number of brass rings on the fingers. The men bear suspended from one of their shoulders a cloth bag containing two or more partitions, in which they keep their vilangupetti or box containing betel, tobacco, and chunam. They carry, too, suspended from the shoulder, a cane basket wherein they place their day's crop of grain or roots, or any other food obtained by them. They attach to their waist-string or cloth a billhook and knife, and carry their bows and arrows slung on their shoulders. Whenever the Kānikars from the different kānis or settlements have to be gathered together for a common meeting, or for going together elsewhere on a common purpose, a messenger amongst them carries from one kāni to another the message with a knot of fibres of creepers, which serves as a symbol of call. The knotted fibre is passed on from one kāni to another till the required assembly is secured. It is thus that I secured my Kānikars to present them to their Excellencies Lord and Lady Curzon."

For most of the information contained in this article I am indebted to Mateer's 'Native Life in Travancore,' an article by Mr. Ratnaswami Aiyar,* and notes by Mr. N. Subrahmani Aiyar.

---

* Indian Review, III, 1902.

Kani Kuruppu.—Barbers of the Kaniyans.

Kani Rāzu.—A name, denoting fortune-telling Rāzus, sometimes used as a synonym by Bhatrāzus, in whose songs it occurs. The name Kani-vāndlu, or fortune-tellers, occurs as a synonym of Yerukala.

Kaniyan.—Kaniyan, spelt and pronounced Kanisan in Malabar, is a Malayālam corruption of the Sanskrit Ganika, meaning an astrologer. The word was originally Kani, in which form it invariably appears in Malayālam works and Tamil documents. The honorific suffix 'ān' has been added subsequently.

The two titles, generally applied to Kaniyans, are Panikkar and Āsan. The former is said to be a common title in Malabar, but in Travancore it seems to be restricted to the north. The word Panikkar comes from pani, or work, viz., that of military training. The fact that most of the families, who own this title at present, were once teachers of bodily exercises, is evident not only from the name kalari, literally a military school, by which their houses are usually known, but also from the Kēralolpatti, which assigns military training as a duty of the caste. Āsan, a corruption of the Sanskrit Āchārya, is a common title among Kaniyans in South Travancore. Special titles, such as Anantapadmanābham, Sivasankaran, and Sankili, are said to be possessed by certain families in the south, having been conferred on them by kings in olden times. Some Kaniyans in the north enjoy the surname of Nampikuruppu.

Kaniyans are divided into two endogamous sections, viz., Kaniyar and Tīnta (or polluting). The occupations of the latter are umbrella-making and spirit-exorcising, while the others remain astrologers, pure and simple. A few families, living at Alengad, are called Vattakan Kaniyans, and are believed to have come there on the

eve of Tīpū Sultan's invasion. The women of the Kaniyans proper do not eat with them. According to tradition, eight sub-septs are said to have existed among the Kaniyans, four of which were known as kiriyams, and four as illams. The names of the former are Annavikkannam, Karivattam, Kutappilla, and Nanna; of the latter Pampara, Tachchazham, Netumkanam, and Ayyarkāla. These divisions were once endogamous, but this distinction has now disappeared.

In a note on the Kaniyans of the Cochin State,* Mr. L. K. Anantha Krishna Iyer writes that "there is some difference in the social status between the Kaniyans of the southern, and the Kalari Panikkans of the northern parts of the State. The latter profess a kind of superiority in status, on the ground that the former have no kalaris. It is also said by the latter that the occupation of the former was once that of umbrella-making, and that astrology as a profession has been recently adopted by them. There is at present neither intermarriage, nor interdining between them. The Kaniyans pollute the Kalari Panikkans by touch." In connection with the old village organisation in Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer writes further that "every tara or kara (village) consisted of all castemen below Brāhmans, especially the Nāyars of all classes, more or less living in a community, the Kammālans, Izhuvans, Pānāns, Mannans, and other castemen living further apart. For every such village in the northern part of the State, there was also a Kalari Panikkan, with a kalari (gymnastic or military school), where the young men of the village, chiefly the Nāyars, were trained in all kinds of athletic feats, and in arms. The institution of the kalaris has

* Monograph, Ethnog. Survey, Cochin.

now disappeared, though the building remains in some places, and the Panikkans are now mainly astrologers and village schoolmasters. According to their own statement, Parasurāma, the great coloniser of Kērala, established kalaris throughout the kingdom, and appointed them as the masters to train Sūdra young men in all kinds of feats (one thousand and eight in number), for the protection of the country against foreign invaders. The Nāyars, who then formed the fighting race, were mostly trained by the Panikkans. In memory of this, the Kalari Panikkans of the northern portions of the State, and of South Malabar, profess even now a preceptorship to the Nāyars, and the Nāyars show them some respect, being present at their marriages and other ceremonies. The Pannikkans say that the Nāyars obtained their kalaris from them. There are still a few among the Panikkans, here and there, fit to teach young men various feats. The following are the names of some of them :—

(1) Pitichu Kali. Two persons play on their drums (chenda), while a third person, well dressed in a kacha, and with a turban on his head, and provided with a sword and shield, performs various feats in harmony with the drum beating. It is a kind of sword-dance.

(2) Parishathalam Kali. A large pandal (booth) is erected in front of the house where the performance is to take place, and the boys below sixteen, who have been previously trained for it, are brought there. The performance takes place at night. The chenda, maddhalam, chengala, and elathalam (circular bell-metal plates slightly concave in the middle) are the instruments used in the performance. After the performance, the boys, whom the Āsan has trained, present themselves before him, and remunerate him with whatever they can afford.

Parties are organised to give this performance on all auspicious occasions in rural districts.

(3) Kolati. Around a lighted lamp, a number of persons stand in a circle, each with a stick a foot in length, and as thick as a thumb, in each hand. They begin to sing, first in slow time, and gradually in rapid measure. The time is marked by each one hitting his neighbours' sticks with his own on both sides. Much dexterity and precision are required, as also experience in combined action and movements, lest the amateur should be hit by his neighbours as the measure is accelerated. The songs are invariably in praise of God or man."

The Kaniyans, according to one tradition, are Brāhman astrologers, who gradually lost their position, as their predictions became less and less accurate. Concerning their legendary history, Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer writes as follows. "Once, says one of these legends, when the god Subrahmanya, son of Siva, and his friend were learning astrology, they knew that the sound of a lizard close by foreboded some evil to the mother of the former. The friend practiced some magical rite, which averted the evil. His mother, who had been in a state of unconsciousness, suddenly woke up as if from slumber, and asked the son 'Kany-ar,' *i.e.*, who it was that she looked at. To which the son replied that she was looking at a Kaniyan (astrologer). The Kaniyans still believe that the umbrella, the stick, the holy ashes, and the purse of cowries, which form the paraphernalia of a Kaniyan nowadays, were given by Subramanya. The following is another tradition regarding the origin of the caste. In ancient times, it is said, Pānāns, Vēlans, and Kaniyans were practicing magic, but astrology as a profession was practiced exclusively by the Brāhmans.

There lived a famous astrologer, Thalakkaleth Bhattathiripad, who was the most renowned of the astrologers of the time. He had a son whose horoscope he cast, and from it he concluded that his son would live long. Unfortunately he proved to be mistaken, for his son died. Unable to find out the error in his calculation and prediction, he took the horoscope to an equally famous astrologer of the Chōla kingdom, who, aware of the cause of his advent, directed him to adore some deity that might aid him in the working out of his predictions. Accordingly he came to the Trichūr temple, where, as directed, he spent some days in devotion to the deity. Thereafter he worked wonders in astrology, and became so well known in Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, that he commanded the respect and admiration of the rulers, who invited him to cast horoscopes, and make predictions. For so doing he was liberally rewarded. One day a Brāhman, hearing that his guru at Benares was seriously ill, consulted the Bhattathiripad whether and how he would be able to see him before his death. The Brāhman astrologer directed him to go to the southern side of the Trichūr temple, where he would see two persons coming towards him, who might gratify his desire to see his preceptor. These persons were really the servants of Yama (the god of death). They asked him to touch them, and he at once found himself at the side of his teacher. The Brāhman was asked who had directed him to them, and, when he told them that it was the renowned Brāhman astrologer, they cursed him, saying that he would become an outcaste. This fate came as no surprise to the astrologer, for he had already perceived from an evil conjunction of the planets that disgrace and danger were impending. To try to avoid the sad fate which he foresaw, he left

his home and friends, and set out on a boating excursion in a river close by Pazhūr. The night was dark, and it was midnight when he reached the middle of the stream. A severe storm, accompanied by rain, had come on, and the river was in flood. He was swept away to an unknown region, and scrambled ashore in torrents of rain and in darkness, when he saw a light in a house near where he landed, and he made for it in an exhausted condition. On reaching it, he lay down in the verandah at the gate of the house, musing on the untoward events of the night, and on his affectionate family whom he had left. The hut belonged to the family of a Kaniyan,* who, as it happened, had had a quarrel with his wife that day, and had left his hut. Anxiously expecting her husband's return, the wife opened the door about midnight, and, seeing a man lying in the verandah, mistook him for her husband. The man was so wrapt in his thoughts of his home that he in turn mistook her for his wife. When the Brāhman woke up from his slumber, he found her to be a Kaniya woman. On looking at the star in the heavens to calculate the precise time, he saw that the prediction that he would become an outcaste had been fulfilled. He accepted the degradation, and lived the rest of his days with the Kaniya woman. She bore him several sons, whom in due course he educated in the lore of his profession, and for whom, by his influence, he obtained an important place in the Hindu social system as astrologers (Ganikans). It is said that, according to his instruction, his body, after his death, was placed in a coffin, and buried in the courtyard of the house. The spot is still shown, and an elevated platform is constructed,

* According to another version of the legend, it was the hut of a Tiyan.

with a thatched roof over it. A lighted lamp is placed at all times on the platform, and in front of it astrological calculations and predictions are made, for it is believed that those who made such calculations there will have the aid of the spirit of their dead Brāhman ancestor, who was so learned in the science that he could tell of events long past, and predict even future birth. As an instance of the last, the following incident may be given. Once the great Brāhman ascetic Vilwamangalath Swāmiyar was suffering severely from pains in the stomach, when he prayed to the divine Krishna for relief. Finding no remedy, he turned to a Brāhman friend, a Yōgi, who gave him some holy ashes, which he took, and which relieved him of the pains. He mentioned the fact to his beloved god Krishna, who, by the pious adoration of the ascetic, appeared before him, when he said that he would have three births in the world instead of one which was destined for him. With an eager desire to know what they would be, he consulted the Bhattathiripad, who said that he would be born first as a rat-snake (*Zamenis mucosus*), then as an ox, and thirdly as a tulsi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*), and that he would be along with him in these births. With great pleasure he returned home. It is also said that the astrologer himself was born as an ox, and was in this form afterwards supported by the members of his family. The incident is said to have taken place at Pazhūr, eighteen miles east of Ernakulam. The members of the family are called Pazhūr Kaniyans, and are well known throughout Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, for their predictions in astrology, and all classes of people even now resort to them for aid in predictions. The Kalari Panikkans in the northern parts of the Cochin State have a different account of the origin of the caste.

Once, they say, a sage and astrologer, named a Ganikan, was making prediction to a Sūdra regarding his future destiny. As this was done by him when in an uncleanly state, he was cursed by the Saptharishis (seven sages). The Panikkans who are reputed to be his descendants are ordained to be teachers and astrologers of all castes below Brāhmans."

According to another legendary account, there were Kaniyans before the time of Bhattatiri, but their astrological attainments are connected with him. Talakulattu Bhattatiri was one of the earliest astrologers of renown, being the author of Muhūrtapadavi, and lived in the fourth century A.D. There is a tradition, believed by the Kaniyans south of Neyyattenkara, that their ancestor was descended from the union of a Gandharva woman with Kani, a Brāhman saint, who lived in the western ghāts. Their grandson propitiated the god Subrahmanya presiding over astronomy, and acquired the surname Nālīka from his never-ceasing truthfulness. Some of the southern Kaniyans even at the present day call themselves Nāli. According to another legend, Paramēswara and his wife Parvati were living happily together, when Agni fell desperately in love with the latter. Eventually, Paramēswara caught them together, and, to save Agni, Parvati suggested that he should hide himself inside her body. On Agni doing this, Parvati became very indisposed, and Paramēswara, distressed at seeing his wife rolling in agony, shed tears, one of which fell on the ground, and became turned into a man, who, being divinely born, detected the cause of Parvati's indisposition, and, asking for some incense, sprinkled it over a blazing torch. Agni, seeing his opportunity, escaped in the smoke, and Parvati had instant relief. For this service,

Paramēswara blessed the man, and appointed him and his descendants to cure diseases, exorcise demons, and foretell events.

The Kaniyans of Malabar have been connected by tradition with the Valluvans of the Tamil country, who are the priests, doctors, and astrologers of the Pallans and Paraiyans. According to this tradition, the modern Kaniyans are traced to the Valluvans brought from the east by a Perumāl who ruled over Kerala in 350 M.E. The latter are believed to have become Kaniyans proper, while the old Kaniyans of the west coast descended to the rank of Tīntā Kaniyans. The chief of the Valluvans so brought was a Yōgi or ascetic, who, being asked by a Nambūtiri concerning a missing article at Pazhūr, replied correctly that the lost ring had been placed in a hole in the bank of the Nambūtiri's tank (pond), and was consequently invited to settle there permanently.

The Kaniyans are easily recognised by their punctilious cleanness of person and clothing, the iron style and knife tucked into the waist, the palm umbrella with its ribs holding numbers of horoscopes, their low artistic bow, and their deliberate answers to questions put to them. Most of them are intelligent, and well versed in Malayālam and Sanskrit. They are, however, not a flourishing community, being averse to manual labour, and depending for their living on their hereditary profession. There are no more conservative people in Travancore, and none of them have taken kindly to western education. In their clothing they follow the orthodox Malabar fashion. The dress of the males seldom hangs loose, being tucked in in token of humility. The Kaniyan, when wanted in his professional capacity, presents himself with triple ash marks of Siva on his chest, arms, and forehead. The woman's ornaments

resemble those of the Izhuvans. Fish and flesh are not forbidden as food, but there are many families, as those of Pazhūr and Onakkūru, which strictly abstain from meat. Marriage between families which eat and abstain from flesh is not absolutely forbidden. But a wife must give up eating flesh immediately on entering the house of her vegetarian husband. The profession of the Kaniyans is astrology. Marco Polo, writing as early as the thirteenth century about Travancore, says that it was even then pre-eminently the land of astrologers. Barbosa, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, has a detailed reference to the Kaniyans, of whom he writes that "they learn letters and astronomy, and some of them are great astrologers, and foretell many future things, and form judgments upon the births of men. Kings and great persons send to call them, and come out of their palaces to gardens and pleasure-grounds to see them, and ask them what they desire to know; and these people form judgment upon these things in a few days, and return to those that asked of them, but they may not enter the palaces; nor may they approach the king's person on account of being low people. And the king is then alone with him. They are great diviners, and pay great attention to times and places of good and bad luck, which they cause to be observed by those kings and great men, and by the merchants also; and they take care to do their business at the time which these astrologers advise them, and they do the same in their voyages and marriages. And by these means these men gain a great deal." Buchanan, three centuries later, alludes in the same glowing terms to the prosperity of the Kaniyans. He notes that they are of very low caste, a Nambūtiri coming within twenty-four feet of one being obliged to purify himself by prayer and ablution. "The

Kaniyans," he writes, "possess almanacks, by which they inform people as to the proper time for performing ceremonies or sowing their seeds, and the hours which are fortunate or unfortunate for any undertaking. When persons are sick or in trouble, the Cunishun, by performing certain ceremonies in a magical square of 12 places, discovers what spirit is the cause of the evil, and also how it may be appeased. Some Cunishuns possess mantrams, with which they pretend to cast out devils." Captain Conner notes twenty years later that "Kanneans derive the appellation from the science of divination, which some of their sect profess. The Kannean fixes the propitious moment for every undertaking, all hysterical affections being supposed to be the visitation of some troublesome spirit. His incantations are believed alone able to subdue it."

The Kaniyans are practically the guiding spirits in all the social and domestic concerns of Travancoreans, and even Muhammadans and Christians do not fail to profit by their wisdom. From the moment of the birth of an infant, which is noted by the Kaniyan for the purpose of casting its horoscope, to the moment of death, the services of the village astrologer are constantly in requisition. He is invariably consulted as to the cause of all calamities, and the cautious answers that he gives satisfy the people. "Putrō na putri," which may either mean no son but a daughter, or no daughter but a son, is jocosely referred to as the type of a Kaniyan's answer, when questioned about the sex of a child *in utero*. "It would be difficult," Mr. Logan writes,* "to describe a single important occasion in everyday life when the Kanisan is not at hand as a guiding spirit, foretelling

* Malabar Manual.

lucky days and hours, casting horoscopes, explaining the cause of calamities, prescribing remedies for untoward events, and physicians (not physic) for sick persons. Seed cannot be sown, or trees planted, unless the Kanisan has been consulted beforehand. He is even asked to consult his shastras to find lucky days and moments for setting out on a journey, commencing an enterprise, giving a loan, executing a deed, or shaving the head. For such important occasions as births, marriages, tonsure, investiture with the sacred thread, and beginning the A, B, C, the Kanisan is of course indispensable. His work in short mixes him up with the gravest as well as the most trivial of the domestic events of the people, and his influence and position are correspondingly great. The astrologer's finding, as one will solemnly assert with all due reverence, is the oracle of God himself, with the justice of which everyone ought to be satisfied, and the poorer classes follow his dictates unhesitatingly. There is no prescribed scale of fees for his services, and in this respect he is like the native physician and teacher. Those who consult him, however, rarely come empty-handed, and the gift is proportioned to the means of the party, and the time spent in serving him. If no fee is given, the Kanisan does not exact it, as it is one of his professional characteristics, and a matter of personal etiquette, that the astrologer should be unselfish, and not greedy of gain. On public occasions, however, and on important domestic events, a fixed scale of fees is usually adhered to. The astrologer's most busy time is from January to July, the period of harvest and of marriages, but in the other six months of the year his is far from being an idle life. His most lucrative business lies in casting horoscopes, recording the events of a man's life from birth to death, pointing

out dangerous periods of life, and prescribing rules and ceremonies to be observed by individuals for the purpose of propitiating the gods and planets, and so averting the calamities of dangerous times. He also shows favourable junctures for the commencement of undertakings, and the grantham or book, written on palmyra leaf, sets forth in considerable detail the person's disposition and mental qualities, as affected by the position of the planets in the zodiac at the moment of birth. All this is a work of labour, and of time. There are few members of respectable families who are not thus provided, and nobody grudges the five to twenty-five rupees usually paid for a horoscope according to the position and reputation of the astrologer. Two things are essential to the astrologer, namely, a bag of cowry shells (*Cypræa moneta*), and an almanac. When any one comes to consult him, he quietly sits down, facing the sun, on a plank seat or mat, murmuring some mantrams or sacred verses, opens his bag of cowries, and pours them on the floor. With his right hand he moves them slowly round and round, solemnly reciting meanwhile a stanza or two in praise of his guru or teacher, and of his deity, invoking their help. He then stops, and explains what he has been doing, at the same time taking a handful of cowries from the heap, and placing them on one side. In front is a diagram drawn with chalk on the floor, and consisting of twelve compartments (rāsis) one for each month in the year. Before commencing operations with the diagram, he selects three or five of the cowries highest up in the heap, and places them in a line on the right-hand side. [In an account before me, three cowries and two glass bottle-stoppers are mentioned as being placed on this side.] These represent Ganapati (the belly god, the remover of difficulties), the sun, the planet Jupiter,

Sarasvati (the goddess of speech), and his own guru or preceptor. To all of these the astrologer gives due obeisance, touching his ears and the ground three times with both hands. The cowries are next arranged in the compartments of the diagram, and are moved about from compartment to compartment by the astrologer, who quotes meanwhile the authority on which he makes the moves. Finally he explains the result, and ends with again worshipping the deified cowries, who were witnessing the operation as spectators." According to another account,* the astrologer "pours his cowries on the ground, and, after rolling them in the palm of his right hand, while repeating mantrams (consecrated formulæ), he selects the largest, and places them in a row outside the diagram at its right hand top corner. They represent the first seven planets, and he does obeisance to them, touching his forehead and the ground three times with both hands. The relative position of the nine planets is then worked out, and illustrated with cowries in the diagram."

At the chal (furrow) ceremony in Malabar, on the eve of the new agricultural year, "every Hindu house in the district is visited by the Kanisans of the respective dēsams, who, for a modest present of rice, vegetables and oils, makes a forecast of the season's prospects, which is engrossed on a cadjan (palm leaf). This is called the Vishu phalam, which is obtained by comparing the nativity with the equinox. Special mention is made therein as to the probable rainfall from the position of the planets—highly prized information in a district where there are no irrigation works or large reservoirs for water." †

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district.

† C. Karunakara Menon. Madras Mus. Bull., V, 2, 1906.

The science of astrology is studied and practiced by other castes, but the Kani house of Pazhūr is the most celebrated. Numerous stories are related of the astrological skill of the Pazhūr Kaniyans, of which one relates to the planets Mercury and Venus, who, arriving at the house of one of the Kaniyans, were asked by him to wait at the gate. He then jumped into a neighbouring well, to conduct some prayers with a view to keeping them there permanently. In this task he succeeded, and even today a prophecy made at that out-house is believed to be certain of turning out true.

In addition to astrology, the Kaniyans practice sorcery and exorcism, which are strictly the occupation of the Tīntā Kaniyans. The process by which devils are driven out is known as kōlamtullal (a peculiar dance). A troupe of Kaniyans, on being invited to a house where a person is suspected of being possessed by a devil, go there wearing masques representing Gandharva, Yakshi, Bhairava, Raktēsvari, and other demons, and dressed up in tender cocoanut leaves. Accompanied by music and songs, they rush towards the affected person, who is seated in the midst of the assembly, and frighten away the evil spirit. For the cure of disease, which is considered as incurable by ordinary methods of treatment, a form of exorcism called kālapāsamtikkuka, or the removal of the rope or evil influence, is resorted to. In this, two Kaniyans take the stage, and play the parts of Siva and Yama, while a third recites in song the story of the immortal Markandēya.

"The Pannikar's astrology," Mr. F. Fawcett writes,* "he will tell you, is divided into three parts :—

* Madras Mus. Bull., II, 3, 1901.

(1) Ganīta, which treats of the constellations.

(2) Sankīta, which explains the origin of the constellations, comets, falling stars, and earthquakes.

(3) Hōra, by which the fate of man is explained.

"The Panikkar, who follows in the footsteps of his forefathers, should have a thorough knowledge of astrology and mathematics, and be learned in the Vēdas. He should be sound in mind and body, truthful, and patient. He should look well after his family, and should worship regularly the nine planets:—Sūryan, the sun; Chandran, moon; Chovva, Mars; Budhan, Mercury; Vyāzham, Guru, or Brihaspati, Jupiter; Sukran, Venus; Sani, Saturn; Rāḥu; and Kētu. The two last, though not visible, are, oddly enough, classed as planets by the Panikkar. They are said to be two parts of an Āsura who was cut in two by Vishnu. The Panikkars also dabble in magic, and I have in my possession a number of yantrams presented to me by a Panikkar. They should be written on a thin gold, silver, or copper plate, and worn on the person. A yantram written on gold is the most effective. As a rule, the yantram is placed in a little cylinder-case made of silver, fastened to a string tied round the waist. Many of these are often worn by the same person. The yantram is sometimes written on cadjan (palm leaf), or paper. I have one of this kind in my collection, taken from the neck of a goat. It is common to see them worn on the arm, around the neck."

The following examples of yantrams are given by Mr. Fawcett:—

Aksharamāla.—Fifty-one letters. Used in connection with every other yantram. Each letter has its own meaning, and does not represent any word. In itself this yantram is powerless, but it gives life to all

others. It must be written on the same plate as the other yantram.

Sūlini.—For protection against sorcery or devils, and to secure the aid of the goddess.

Māha Sūlini.—To prevent all kinds of harm through the devils, chief of whom is Pulatini, he who eats infants. Women wear it to avert miscarriage.

Ganapati.—To increase knowledge, and put away fear and shyness.

Sarasvati.—To enable its possessor to please his listeners, and increase his knowledge.

Santāna gopalam.—As a whole it represents Srī Krishna. Used by barren women, so that they may bear children. It may be traced on a metal plate and worn in the usual way, or on a slab of butter, which is eaten. When the latter method is adopted, it is repeated on forty-one consecutive days, during which the woman, as well as the Panikkar, may not have sexual connection.

Navva.—Drawn in ashes of cow-dung on a new cloth, and tied round the waist. It relieves a woman in labour.

Asvarūdha (to climb a horse).—A person wearing it is able to cover long distances easily on horseback, and he can make the most refractory horse amenable by tying it round its neck. It will also help to cure cattle.

"The charms," Mr. Fawcett explains, "are entirely inoperative, unless accompanied in the first place with the mystic rite, which is the secret of the Panikkar."

Many Kaniyans used formerly to be village schoolmasters, but, with the abolition of the old methods of teaching, their number is steadily decreasing. Some of them are clever physicians. Those who have no pretension to learning live by making palm-leaf umbrellas, which gives occupation to the women. But the industry

is fast declining before the competition of umbrellas imported from foreign countries.

The Kaniyans worship the sun, the planets, the moon, Ganēsa and Subramanya, Vishnu, Siva, and Baghavati. On each day of the week, the planet, which is believed to preside over it, is specially worshipped by an elaborate process, which is compulsorily gone through for at least three weeks after a Kaniyan has become proficient in astrology, and able to make calculations for himself.

It is generally believed that the supreme authority in all social matters affecting the Kaniyan rests in British Malabar with the Yōgi already referred to, in Cochin and North Travancore with the head of the Pazhūr house, and in South Travancore with the eldest member of a house at Manakkad in Trivandrum, known by the name of Sankili. Practically, however, the spiritual headmen, called Kannālmas, are independent. These Kannālmas are much respected, and well paid on festive occasions by every Kaniyan house. They and other elders sit in judgment on persons guilty of adultery, commensality with lower castes, and other offences, and inflict punishments.

The Kaniyans observe both the tāli-kettu ceremony before puberty, and sambandham after that event. Inheritance is through the father, and the eldest male of a family has the management of the ancestral estate. Fraternal polyandry is said to have been common in olden times, and Mr. Logan observes that, "like the Pāndava brothers, as they proudly point out, the Kanisans used formerly to have one wife in common among several brothers, and this custom is still observed by some of them." There is no restriction to the marriage of widows.

Concerning polyandry, Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer states that "among the Kaniyans, as well as among Panikkans, polyandry largely prevails. If the young woman is intended to be the wife of several brothers, the eldest brother goes to the bride's house, and gives her the cloth, and takes her home the next day along with her parents and relations, who are all well entertained. The young woman and the brothers are seated together, and a sweet preparation is given to them, which signifies that she has become the common wife of all. The Kalari Mūppan (Nāyar headman of the village) also declares her to be such. The guests depart, and the bridegroom (the eldest brother) and the bride are invited to what they call virunnu-oon (sumptuous meal) in the house of the latter, where they stay for a few days. The bridegroom then returns home with the wife. The other brothers, one after another, are similarly entertained along with the bride at her house. The brothers cannot afford to live together for a long time, and they go from place to place, earning their livelihood by astrology. Each brother is at home only for a few days in each month; hence practically the woman has only one husband at a time. If several of them happen to be at home together for a few weeks, each in turn associates with the woman, in accordance with the directions given by their mother."

The Kaniyans follow high-caste Hindus as regards many of their ceremonies. They have their name-bestowing, food-giving and tuft-making ceremonies, and also a superstitious rite called ittaluzhiyuka, or exorcism in child-birth on the seventh or ninth day after the birth of a child. A Kaniyan's education begins in his seventh year. In the sixteenth year a ceremony, corresponding to the upanayana of the higher castes, is performed.

For forty-one days after, the Kannālma initiates the young Kaniyan into the mysteries of astrology and witchcraft. He is obliged to worship Subramanya, the tutelary god of the caste, and abstains from meat and liquor. This may be taken as the close of his Brahmacharya stage or Samāvartana, as marriage cannot take place before the observance of this ceremony.

On the subject of religion, Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer writes that "the Kalari Panikkans and the Kaniyans are generally Saivite worshippers, but are not disinclined to the worship of Vishnu also. It is said that their kalaris are forty-two feet long, and contain the images of forty-two deities. The following are the most important of them:—Subrahmanya, Sastha, Ganapati, Vīrabhadran, Narasimha, Ashtabairavas, Hanumān, and Bhadrakāli. Some of their kalaris, which were seen by me, contained stone and metal images of these gods. Every night a lamp is lighted in front of them for their worship. During the Mandalam (forty days) from the first of Vrischikam to the tenth of Dhanu (14th November to 25th December), the senior member of the Panikkan's family bathes early in the morning, and performs his pūjas to all the gods, making offerings of boiled rice, plantains and cocoanuts. On the fortieth day, *i.e.*, the last day of the Mandalam, a grand pūja is performed individually to every one of the deities in the kalari, and this lasts for twenty-four hours, from sunrise to sunrise, when offerings of boiled rice, parched rice, sheep and fowls are also given. This is the grand pūja performed once in the course of the year. Besides this, some of their deities command their special reverence. For instance, Subrahmanya is adored for the sake of astrology, Sastha for wealth and offspring. They are also worshippers of Sakti in any of her following

manifestations, namely, Bala, Thripura, Mathangi, Ambika, Durga, Bhadrakāli, the object of which is to secure accuracy in their astrological predictions. Further, every member of the caste proficient in astrology daily offers, after an early bath, his prayers to the seven planets. Among the minor deities whom they worship, are also Mallan, Mundian, Muni and Ayutha Vadukan, the first three of which they worship for the prosperity of their cattle, and the last four for their success in the training of young men in athletic feats. These deities are represented by stones placed at the root of some shady tree in their compounds. They also worship the spirits of their ancestors, on the new-moon nights in Karkadakam (July-August), Thulam (October-November), and Makaram (December-January). The Kalari Panikkans celebrate a kind of feast to the spirits of their female ancestors. This is generally done a few days before the celebration of a wedding in their houses, and is probably intended to obtain their blessings for the happy married life of the bride. This corresponds to the performance of Sumangalia Prarthana (feast for the spirits of departed virgins and married women) performed by Brāhmans in their families. At times when small-pox, cholera, and other pestilential diseases prevail in a village, special pūjas are offered to Māriamma (the small-pox demon) and Bhadrakāli, who should be propitiated. On these occasions, their priest turns Velichapād (oracle), and speaks to the village men as if by inspiration, telling them when and how the maladies will subside."

Kaniyans were formerly buried, but are now, excepting young children, cremated in a portion of the grounds of the habitation, or in a spot adjacent thereto. The ashes are collected on the fourth day, and deposited under water. In memory of the deceased, an annual offering

of food is made, and an oblation of water offered on every new moon.

The Potuvans or Kani Kuruppus are the barbers of the Kaniyans, and have the privilege of being in attendance during marriages and funerals. It is only after they have sprinkled water in the houses of polluted Kaniyans that they again become pure. In fact, the Potuvans stand in the same relation to the Kaniyans as the Mārāns to the Nāyars. The Potuvans are not expected to shave the Tīntā Kaniyans.

The Kaniyans are said to keep at a distance of twenty-four feet from a Brāhman or Kshatriya, and half that distance from a Sūdra. The corresponding distances for a Tīntā Kaniyan are thirty-six and eighteen feet. This restriction is not fully observed in Trivandrum, and south of it. It is noted by Mr. Anantha Krishna Iyer that, on marriage occasions, a Nāyar gives a gift of a few annas and betel leaves to the astrologer, standing close beside him, and yet there is no pollution. The Malayālam proverb "On marriage occasions the Nāyars give dakshina (gift), almost touching the hand," refers to this fact. The Kaniyans cannot enter Brāhmanical temples. They will not receive food from Izhavans, except in a few villages in central Travancore, but this is a regular practice with the Tīntā Kaniyans. It is believed that the Kaniyans proper have no objection to receiving sweetmeats from Kammālans.

The Kaniyans have been summed up as a law-abiding people, who not infrequently add agriculture to their avocations of village doctor, prophet, or demon-driver, and are popular with Christians and Muhammadans as well as with Hindus.*

---

* This account is mainly from an article by Mr. N. Subramani Aiyar.

The late Mr. Pogson, when Government astronomer, used to say that his principal native assistant was an astronomer from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. and an astrologer from 5 P.M. to 10 A.M.

Kannada.—Kannada (Kanarese) has, at recent times of census, been returned as a linguistic or territorial division of various classes, *e.g.*, Agasa, Bēdar, Dēvānga, Holeya, Koracha, Kumbāra, Sāmagāra, Rāchewar, and Uppiliyan.

Kanna Pulayan.—Described by the Rev. W. J. Richards* as Pulayans of Travancore, who wear rather better and more artistically made aprons than the Thanda Pulayan women.

Kannaku.—A prefix to the name of Nanchinat Vellālas in Travancore.

Kannān.—A sub-division of Kammālans, the members of which do braziers' work.

Kannadiyan.—The Kannadiyans have been summed up† as "immigrants from the province of Mysore. Their traditional occupation is said to have been military service, although they follow, at the present day, different pursuits in different districts. They are usually cattle-breeders and cultivators in North and South Arcot and Chingleput, and traders in the southern districts. Most of them are Lingāyats, but a few are Vaishnavites." "They are," it is stated,‡ "in the Mysore State known as Gaulis. At their weddings, five married women are selected, who are required to bathe as each of the most important of the marriage ceremonies is performed, and are alone allowed to cook for, or to touch the happy couple. Weddings last eight days, during which time the bride and bridegroom must not sit on anything but

* Ind. Ant., IX, 1880.

† Manual of the North Arcot district.

‡ Madras Census Report, 1901.

woollen blankets." Some Kannadiyans in the Tanjore district are said to be weavers. For the following account of the Kannadiyans of the Chingleput district I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao.

About twenty miles from the city of Madras is a big tank (lake) named after the village of Chembrambākam, which is close by. The fertile land surrounding this tank is occupied, among others, by a colony of Lingāyats, of whom each household, as a rule, owns several acres of land. With the cultivation thereof, they have the further occupation of cattle grazing. They utilize the products of the cow in various ways, and it supplies them with milk, butter and curds, in the last two of which they carry on a lucrative trade in the city of Madras. The curds sold by them are very highly appreciated by Madras Brāhmans, as they have a sour taste caused by keeping them till fermentation has set in. So great is the demand for their curds that advances of money are made to them, and regular delivery is thus secured. Their price is higher than that of the local Madras curds, and if a Lingāyat buys the latter and sells them at the higher rate, he is decisively stigmatised as being a "local." They will not even touch sheep and goats, and believe that even the smell of these animals will make cows and buffaloes barren.

Though the chief settlement of the Lingāyats is at Chembrambākam, they are also to be found in the adjacent villages and in the Conjeeveram tāluk, and, in all, they number, in the Chingleput district, about four thousand.

The Lingāyats have no idea how their forefathers came to the Chingleput district. Questioned whether they have any relatives in Mysore, many answered in the affirmative, and one even pointed to one in a high

official position as a close relation. Another said that the Gurukkal or Jangam (priest) is one and the same man for the Mysore Lingāyats and themselves. A third told me of his grandfather's wanderings in Mysore, Bellary, and other places of importance to the Lingāyats. I have also heard the story that, on the Chembrambākam Lingāyats being divided into two factions through disputes among the local caste-men, a Lingāyat priest came from Mysore, and brought about their union. These few facts suffice to show that the Lingāyats are emigrants from Mysore, and not converts from the indigenous populations of the district. But what as to the date of their immigration? The earliest date which can, with any show of reason, be ascribed thereto seems to be towards the end of the seventeenth century, when Chikka Dēva Rāja ruled over Mysore. He adopted violent repressive measures against the Lingāyats for quelling a widespread insurrection, which they had fomented against him throughout the State. His measures of financial reform deprived the Lingāyat priesthood of its local leadership and much of its pecuniary profit. What followed may best be stated in the words of Colonel Wilks,* the Mysore historian. "Everywhere the inverted plough, suspended from the tree at the gate of the village, whose shade forms a place of assembly for its inhabitants, announced a state of insurrection. Having determined not to till the land, the husbandmen deserted their villages, and assembled in some places like fugitives seeking a distant settlement; in others as rebels breathing revenge. Chikka Dēva Rāja, however, was too prompt in his measures to admit of any very formidable combination. Before

* Historical Sketches, Mysore.

proceeding to measures of open violence, he adopted a plan of perfidy and horror, yielding to nothing which we find recorded in the annals of the most sanguinary people. An invitation was sent to all the Jangam priests to meet the Rāja at the great temple of Nunjengōd, ostensibly to converse with him on the subject of the refractory conduct of their followers. Treachery was apprehended, and the number which assembled was estimated at about four hundred only. A large pit had been previously prepared in a walled enclosure, connected by a series of squares composed of tent walls with the canopy of audience, at which they were received one at a time, and, after making their obeisance, were desired to retire to a place where, according to custom, they expected to find refreshments prepared at the expense of the Rāja. Expert executioners were in waiting in the square, and every individual in succession was so skilfully beheaded and tumbled into the pit as to give no alarm to those who followed, and the business of the public audience went on without interruption or suspicion. Circular orders had been sent for the destruction on the same day of all the Jangam Mutts (places of residence and worship) in his dominions, and the number reported to have been destroyed was upwards of seven hundred . . . . This notable achievement was followed by the operations of the troops, chiefly cavalry. The orders were distinct and simple—to charge without parley into the midst of the mob; to cut down every man wearing an orange-coloured robe (the peculiar garb of the Jangam priests)."

How far the husbandmen carried out their threat of seeking a distant settlement it is impossible, at this distance of time, to determine. If the theory of religious

persecution as the cause of their emigration has not an air of certainty about it, it is at least plausible.

If the beginning of the eighteenth century is the earliest, the end of that century is the latest date that can be set down for the Lingāyat emigration. That century was perhaps the most troublous one in the modern history of India. Armies were passing and repassing the ghāts, and I have heard from some old gentlemen that the Chingleput Lingāyats, who are mostly shepherds, accompanied the troops in the humble capacity of purveyors of milk and butter.

Whatever the causes of their emigration, we find them in the Chingleput district ordinarily reckoning the Mysore, Salem and Bellary Lingāyats as of their own stock. They freely mix with each other, and I hear contract marital alliances with one another. They speak the Kannada (Kanarese) language—the language of Mysore and Bellary. They call themselves by the name of Kannadiyans or Kannadiyars, after the language they speak, and the part of the village they inhabit—Kannadipauliem, or village of the Kannadiyars. In parts of Madras they are known as Kavadi and Kavadiga (=bearers of head-loads).

Both men and women are possessed of great stamina. Almost every other day they walk to and fro, in all seasons, more than twenty miles by road to sell their butter and curds in Madras. While so journeying, they carry on their heads a curd pot in a rattan basket containing three or four Madras measures of curds, besides another pot containing a measure or so of butter. Some of the men are good acrobats and gymnasts, and I have seen a very old man successively break in two four cocoanuts, each placed on three or four crystals of common salt, leaving the crystals almost

intact. And I have heard that there are men who can so break fifty cocoanuts—perhaps an exaggeration for a considerable number. In general the women may be termed beautiful, and, in Mysore, the Lingāyat women are, by common consent, regarded as models of feminine beauty.

These Lingāyats are divided into two classes, viz., Gauliyars of Dāmara village, and Kadapēri or Kannadiyars proper, of Chembrambākam and other places. The Gauliyars carry their curd pots in rattan baskets; the Kannadiyars in bamboo baskets. Each class has its own beat in the city of Madras, and, while the majority of the rattan basket men traffic mainly in Triplicane, the bamboo basket men carry on their business in Georgetown and other localities. The two classes worship the same gods, feed together, but do not intermarry. The rattan is considered superior to the bamboo section. Both sections are sub-divided into a large number of exogamous septs or bēdagagulu, of which the meaning, with a few exceptions, *e.g.*, split cane, bear, and fruit of *Eugenia Jambolana*, is not clear.

Monogamy appears to be the general rule among them, but polygamy to the extent of having two wives, the second to counteract the sterility of the first, is not rare. Marriage before puberty is the rule, which must not be transgressed. And it is a common thing to see small boys grazing the cattle, who are married to babies hardly more than a year old. Marriages are arranged by the parents, or through intermediaries, with the tacit approval of the community as a whole. The marriage ceremony generally lasts about nine or ten days, and, to lessen the expenses for the individual, several families club together and celebrate their marriages simultaneously. All the preliminaries such as inviting the

wedding guests, etc., are attended to by the agent of the community, who is called Chaudri. The appointment of agent is hereditary.

The first day of the marriage ceremony is employed in the erection of the booth or pandal. On the following day, the bodice-wearing ceremony is performed. The bride and bridegroom are presented with new clothes, which they put on amid general merriment. In connection with this ceremony, the following Mysore story may not be out of place. When Tipu Sultan once saw a Lingāyat woman selling curds in the street without a body cloth, he ordered the cutting off of her breasts. Since then the wearing of long garments has come into use among the whole female population of Mysore.

The third day is the most important, as it is on that day that the Muhūrtham, or tāli-tying ceremony, takes place, and an incident of quite an exceptional character comes off amid general laughter. A Brāhman (generally a Saivite) is formally invited to attend, and pretends that he is unable to do so. But he is, with mock gravity, pressed hard to do so, and, after repeated guarantees of good faith, he finally consents with great reluctance and misgivings. On his arrival at the marriage booth, the headman of the family in which the marriage is taking place seizes him roughly by the head, and ties as tightly as possible five cocoanuts to the kudumi, or lock of hair at the back of the head, amidst the loud, though not real, protestations of the victim. All those present, with all seriousness, pacify him, and he is cheered by the sight of five rupees, which are presented to him. This gift he readily accepts, together with a pair of new cloths and pān-supāri (betel leaves and areca nuts). Meanwhile the young folk have been making sport of him by throwing at his new and old clothes big empty

brinjal fruits (*Solanum Melongena*) filled with turmeric powder and chunām (lime). He goes for the boys, who dodge him, and at last the elders beat off the youngsters with the remark that "after all he is a Brāhman, and ought not to be trifled with in this way." The Brāhman then takes leave, and is heard of no more in connection with the wedding rites. The whole ceremony has a decided ring of mockery about it, and leads one to the conclusion that it is celebrated more in derision than in honour of the Brāhmans. It is a notorious fact that the Lingāyats will not even accept water from a Brāhman's hands, and do not, like many other castes, require his services in connection with marriage or funeral ceremonies. The practice of tying cocoanuts to the hair of the Brāhman seems to be confined to the bamboo section. But an equally curious custom is observed by the rattan section. The village barber is invited to the wedding, and the infant bride and bridegroom are seated naked before him. He is provided with some ghī (clarified butter) in a cocoanut shell, and has to sprinkle some of it on the head of the couple with a grass or reed. He is, however, prevented from doing so by a somewhat cruel contrivance. A big stone (representing the linga) is suspended from his neck by a rope, and he is kept nodding to and fro by another rope which is pulled by young lads behind him. Eventually they leave off, and he sprinkles the ghī, and is dismissed with a few annas, pān-supāri, and the remains of the ghī. By means of the stone the barber is for the moment turned into a Lingāyat.

The officiating priest at the marriage ceremony is a man of their own sect, and is known as the Gurukkal. They address him as Ayyanavaru, a title generally reserved for Brāhmans in Kannada-speaking districts.

The main items of expenditure at a wedding are the musician, presents of clothes, and pān-supāri, especially the areca nuts. One man, who was not rich, told me that it cost him, for a marriage, three maunds of nuts, and that guests come more for them than for the meals, which he characterised as not fit for dogs.

Widow remarriage is permitted. But it is essential that the contracting parties should be widower and widow. For such a marriage no pandal is erected, but all the elders countenance it by their presence. Such a marriage is known as naduvīttu tāli, because the tāli is tied in the mid-house. It is usually a simple affair, and finished in a short time after sunset instead of in the day time. The offspring of such marriages are considered as legitimate, and can inherit. But remarried couples are disqualified from performing certain acts, *e.g.*, the distribution of pān-supāri at weddings, partaking in the hārathi ceremony, etc. The disqualifications attaching to remarried people are, by a curious analogy, extended to deformed persons, who are, in some cases, considered to be widowers and widows.

Among the ordinary names of males are Basappa, Linganna, Dēvanna, Ellappa, Naganna ; and of females Ellamma, Lingi and Nāgamma. It is said that all are entitled to the honorific Saudri ; but the title is specially reserved for the agent of their sect. Among common nicknames are Chikka and Dodda Thamma (younger and elder brother), Āndi (beggar), Karapi (black woman), Gūni (hunch back). In the Mysore Province the most becoming method of addressing a Lingāyat is to call him Sivanē. Their usual titles are Ravut, Appa, Anna, and Saudri.

The child-naming ceremony is a very important one. Five swords with limes fixed to their edges are set in



KANNADIYAN.

a line with equi-distant spaces between them. By each sword are placed two plantain fruits, a cocoanut, four dried dates, two cocoanut cups, pān-supāri, and kārāmani (*Vigna Catiang*) cakes. In front of the swords are also placed rice-balls mixed with turmeric powder, various kinds of vegetables and fruits, curds and milk. Opposite each sword five leaves are spread out, and in front of each leaf a near relation of the family sits. The chief woman of the house then brings five pots full of water, and gives to each man a potful for the worship of the jangama linga which he wears. She also brings consecrated cow-dung ashes. The men pour the water over the linga, holding it in the left hand, and smear both the linga and their faces with the ashes. The woman then retires, and the guests partake of a hearty meal, at the conclusion of which the woman reappears with five vessels full of water, with which they wash their hands. The vessels are then broken, and thrown on a dung-heap. After partaking of pān-supāri and chunām (lime), each of the men ties up some of the food in a towel, takes one of the swords in his hand, and leaves the house without turning back. The headman of the family then removes the limes from the swords, and puts them back in their scabbards. The same evening the child is named. Sometimes this ceremony, which is costly, is held even after the child is a year old.

When a death takes place, information is sent round to the relations and castemen by two boys carrying little sticks in their hands. Under the instructions of a priest, the inmates of the house begin to make arrangements for the funeral. The corpse is washed, and the priest's feet are also washed, and the refuse-water on the ground is poured over the corpse or into

its mouth. Among certain sections of Lingāyats it is customary, contrary to the usual Hindu practice, to invite the friends and relations, who have come for the funeral, to a banquet, at which the priest is a guest. It is said that the priest, after partaking of food, vomits a portion of it, which is shared by the members of the family. These practices do not seem to be followed by the Chingleput Lingāyats. A second bath is given to the corpse, and then the nine orifices of the body are closed with cotton or cloth. The corpse is then dressed as in life, and, if it be that of a priest, is robed in the characteristic orange tawny dress. Before clothing it, the consecrated cow-dung ashes are smeared over the forehead, arms, chest, and abdomen. The bier is made like a car, such as is seen in temple processions on the occasion of car festivals. To each of its four bamboo posts are attached a plantain tree and a cocoanut, and it is decorated with bright flowers. In the middle of the bier is a wooden plank, on which the corpse is set in a sitting position. The priest touches the dead body three or four times with his right leg, and the funeral cortège, accompanied by weird village music, proceeds to the burial-ground. The corpse, after removal from the bier, is placed in the grave in a sitting posture, facing south, with the linga, which the man had worn during life, in the mouth. Salt, according to the means of the family, is thrown into the grave by friends and relations, and it is considered that a man's life would be wasted if he did not do this small service for a dead fellow-casteman. They quote the proverb "Did he go unserviceable even for a handful of mud?" The grave is filled in, and four lights are placed at the corners. The priest, standing over the head of the corpse, faces the lamps, with branches of *Leucas aspera* and *Vitex Negundo* at

his feet. A cocoanut is broken and camphor burnt, and the priest says "Lingannah (or whatever the name of the dead man may be), leaving Nara Loka, you have gone to Bhu Loka," which is a little incongruous, for Nara Loka and Bhu Loka are identical. Perhaps the latter is a mistake for Swarga Loka, the abode of bliss of Brāhmanical theology. Possibly, Swarga Loka is not mentioned, because it signifies the abode of Vishnu. Then the priest calls out Oogay ! Oogay ! and the funeral ceremony is at an end. On their return home the corpse-bearers, priest, and sons of the deceased, take buttermilk, and apply it with the right hand to the left side of the back. A Nandi (the sacred bull) is made of mud, or bricks and mortar, and set up over the grave. Unmarried girls and boys are buried in a lying position. From enquiries made among the Lingāyats of Chembarambākam, it appears that, when a death has occurred, pollution is observed by the near relatives; and, even if they are living at such distant places as Bellary or Bangalore, pollution must be observed, and dissolved by a bath.

Basava attached no importance to pilgrimages. The Chingleput Lingāyats, however, perform what they call Jātray (*i.e.*, pilgrimage), of which the principal celebration takes place in Chittra-Vyasi (April-May), and is called Vīrabhadra Jātray. The bamboo Lingāyats of Chembarambākam send word, with some raw rice, to the rattan Lingāyats of Kadapēri to come to the festival on a fixed day with the image of their god Vīrabhadra. The Gauliyars of Kadapēri and other villages accordingly proceed to a tank on the confines of the village of Chembrambākam, and send word that they have responded to the call of their brethren. The chief men of the village, accompanied by a crowd, and the village

musicians, start for the tank, and bring in the Kadapēri guests. After a feast all retire for the night, and get up at 3 A.M. for the celebration of the festival. Swords are unsheathed from their scabbards, and there is a deafening noise from trumpets and pipes. The images of Vīrabhadra are taken in procession to a tank, and, on the way thither, the idol bearers and others pretend that they are inspired, and bawl out the various names of the god. Sometimes they become so frenzied that the people break cocoanuts on their foreheads, or pierce their neck and wrists with a big needle, such as is used in stitching gunny bags. Under this treatment the inspired ones calm down. All along the route cocoanuts are broken, and may amount to as many as four hundred, which become the perquisite of the village washerman. When the tank is reached, pān-supāri and kadalai (*Cicer arietinum*) are distributed among the crowd. On the return journey, the village washerman has to spread dupatis (cloths) for the procession to walk over. At about noon a hearty meal is partaken of, and the ceremony is at an end. After a few days, a return celebration takes place at Kadapēri. The Vīrabhadra images of the two sections, it may be noted, are regarded as brothers. Other ceremonial pilgrimages are also made to Tirutāni, Tiruvallūr and Mylapore, and they go to Tiruvallūr on new moon days, bathe in the tank, and make offerings to Vīra Rāghava, a Vaishnava deity. They do not observe the feast of Pongal, which is so widely celebrated throughout Southern India. It is said that the celebration thereof was stopped, because, on one occasion, the cattle bolted, and the men who went in pursuit of them never returned. The Ugādi, or new year feast, is observed by them as a day of general mourning. They also observe the Kāma festival with great éclat, and one

of their national songs relates to the burning of Kāma. When singing it during their journeys with the curd-pots, they are said to lose themselves, and arrive at their destination without knowing the distance that they have marched.

In addition to the grand Vīrabhadra festival, which is celebrated annually, the Arisērvai festival is also observed as a great occasion. This is no doubt a Tamil rendering of the Sanskrit Harisērvai, which means the service of Hari or worship of Vishnu. It is strange that Lingāyats should have this formal worship of Vishnu, and it must be a result of their environment, as they are surrounded on all sides by Vaishnavite temples. More than six months before the festival a meeting of elders is convened, and it is decided that an assessment of three pies per basket shall be levied, and the Saudri is made honorary treasurer of the fund. If a house has two or more baskets, *i.e.*, persons using baskets in their trade, it must contribute a corresponding number of three pies. In other words, the basket, and not the family, is the unit in their communal finance. An invitation, accompanied by pān-supāri, is sent to the Thādans (Vaishnavite dramatists) near Conjeeveram, asking them to attend the festival on the last Saturday of Paratāsi, the four Saturdays of which month are consecrated to Vishnu. The Thādans arrive in due course at Chembrambākam, the centre of the bamboo section of the Lingāyats, and make arrangements for the festival. Invitations are sent to five persons of the Lingāyat community, who fast from morning till evening. About 8 or 9 P.M., these five guests, who perhaps represent priests for the occasion, arrive at the pandal (booth), and leaves are spread out before them, and a meal of rice, dhal (*Cajanus indicus*) water, cakes, broken cocoanuts,

etc., is served to them. But, instead of partaking thereof, they sit looking towards a lighted lamp, and close their eyes in meditation. They then quietly retire to their homes, where they take the evening meal. After a torchlight procession with torches fed with ghī (clarified butter) the village washermen come to the pandal, and collect together the leaves and food, which have been left there. About 11 P.M. the villagers repair to the spot where a dramatic performance of Hiranya Kasyapa Nātakam, or the Prahallāda Charitram, is held during five alternate nights. The latter play is based on a favourite story in the Bhāgavatha, and it is strange that it should be got up and witnessed by a community of Saivites, some of whom (Vīra Saivas) are such extremists that they would not tolerate the sight of a Vaishnavite at a distance.

The Chembrambākam Lingāyats appear to join the other villagers in the performance of the annual pūja (worship) to the village deity, Nāmamdamma, who is worshipped in order to ward off cholera and cattle disease. One mode of propitiating her is by sacrificing a goat, collecting its entrails and placing them in a pot, with its mouth covered with goat skin, which is taken round the village, and buried in a corner. The pot is called Bali Sētti, and he who comes in front of it while it is being carried through the streets, is supposed to be sure to suffer from serious illness, or even die. The sacrifice, filling of the pot, and its carriage through the streets, are all performed by low class Ōcchans and Vettiyāns. The Chembrambākam Lingāyats assert that the cholera goddess has given a promise that she will not attack any of their community, and keeps it faithfully, and none of them die even during the worst cholera epidemics.

Kanni (rope).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kapata.—A name for rag-wearing Koragas.

Kappala (frog).—An exogamous sept of Mādiga, and sub-division of Yānādis, who are said to be frog-eaters. It is also a gōtra of Janappans, who have a legend that, when some of their family were fishing, they caught a haul of big frogs instead of fish. Consequently, members of this gōtra will not injure frogs. I have seen frogs hanging up for sale in the Cochin bazār.

Kāppiliyan.—The Kāppiliyans, or Karumpurath-thāls, as they are sometimes called, are Canarese-speaking farmers, who are found chiefly in Madura and Tinnevelly. It is noted, in the Manual of the Madura district, that "a few of the original Poligars were Canarese; and it is to be presumed that the Kāppiliyans immigrated under their auspices. They are a decent and respectable class of farmers. Their most common agnomen is Koundan (or Kavandan)."

Some Kāppiliyans say that they came south six or seven generations ago, along with the Urumikkārans, from the banks of the Tungabhadra river, because the Tottiyans tried to ravish their women. According to another tradition, similar to that current among the Tottiyans, "the caste was oppressed by the Musalmans of the north, fled across the Tungabhadra, and was saved by two pongu (*Pongamia glabra*) trees bridging an unfordable stream, which blocked their escape. They travelled, says the legend, through Mysore to Conjeeveram, thence to Coimbatore, and thence to the Madura district. The stay at Conjeeveram is always emphasised, and is supported by the fact that the caste has shrines dedicated to Kānchi Varadarāja Perumāl."*

---

* Gazetteer of the Madura district.

The Kāppiliyans are one of the nine Kambalam castes, who are so called because, at their caste council meetings, a kambli (blanket) is spread, on which is placed a kalasam (brass vessel) filled with water, and decorated with flowers. Its mouth is closed by mango leaves and a cocoanut. According to the Gazetteer of the Madura district, they are "split into two endogamous sub-divisions, namely the Dharmakattu, so called because, out of charity, they allow widows to marry one more husband, and the Mūnukattu, who permit a woman to have three husbands in succession." They are also said to recognise, among themselves, four sub-divisions, Vokkiliyan (cultivator), Mūru Balayanōru (three bangle people), Bottu Kattōru (bottu tying people), Vokkulothōru, to the last of which the following notes mainly refer.

They have a large number of exogamous septs, which are further divided into exogamous sub-septs, of which the following are examples :—

Sept.	*Sub-sept.*
Basiriyōru	Hennu (female) Basiri. Gandu (male) Basiri.
Lodduvōru	Loddu. Palingi Loddu. Kolingi Loddu. Uddudhōru (*Phaseolus Mungo*, var. *radiatus*). Huniséyōru (tamarind people). Mottuguni. Manalōru, sand people.

One exogamous sept is called Ānē (elephant), and as names of sub-septs, named after animate or inanimate objects, I may mention Hatti (hamlet), Aranē (lizard) and Puli (tiger).

The affairs of the caste are regulated by a headman called Gauda, assisted by the Saundari. In some places, the assistance of a Pallan or Maravan called Jādipillai, is sought.

Marriage is, as a rule, adult, and the common emblem of married life—the tāli or bottu—is dispensed with. On the first day of the marriage ceremonies, the bride and bridegroom are conducted, towards evening, to the houses of their maternal uncles. There the nalagu ceremony, or smearing the body with *Phaseolus Mungo*, sandal and turmeric paste, is performed, and the uncles place toe-rings on the feet of the contracting couple. On the following day, the bride's price is paid, and betel is distributed, in the presence of a Kummara, Urumikkāran, and washerman, to the villagers in a special order of precedence. On the third day, the bridegroom goes in procession to the house of the bride, and their fingers are linked together by the maternal uncle or uncles. For this reason, the day is called Kai Kudukāhodina, or hand-locking day.

It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Madura district, that "the binding portions of the marriage ceremony are the donning by the bride of a turmeric-coloured cloth sent her by bridegroom, and of black glass bangles (unmarried girls may only wear bangles made of lac), and the linking of the couple's little fingers. A man's right to marry his paternal aunt's daughter is so rigorously insisted upon that, as among the Tottiyans, ill-assorted matches are common. A woman, whose husband is too young to fulfil the duties of his position, is allowed to consort with his near relations, and the children so begotten are treated as his. [It is said that a woman does not suffer in reputation, if she cohabits with her brothers-in-law.] Adultery outside the caste is

punished by expulsion, and, to show that the woman is thenceforward as good as dead, funeral ceremonies are solemnly performed to some trinket of hers, and this is afterwards burnt."

At the first menstrual period, a girl remains under pollution for thirteen days, in a corner of the house or outside it in the village common land (mandai). If she remains within, her maternal uncle makes a screen, and, if outside, a temporary hut, and, in return for his services, receives a hearty meal. On the thirteenth day the girl bathes in a tank (pond), and, as she enters the house, has to pass over a pestle and a cake. Near the entrance, some food is placed, which a dog is allowed to eat. While so doing, it receives a severe beating. The more noise it makes, the better is the omen for a large family of children. If the poor brute does not howl, it is supposed that the girl will bear no children. A cotton thread, dyed with turmeric, is tied round her neck by a married woman, and, if she herself is married, she puts on glass bangles. The hut is burnt down and the pots she used are broken to atoms.

The caste deities are said to be Lakkamma and Vīra Lakkamma, but they also worship other deities, such as Chenrāya, Thimmappa, and Siranga Perumal. Certain septs seem to have particular deities, whom they worship. Thus Thimmarāya is reverenced by the Dasiriyōru, and Malamma by the Hattiyōru.

The dead are as a rule cremated, but children, those who have died of cholera, and pregnant women, are buried. In the case of the last, the child is, before burial, removed from the mother's body. The funeral ceremonies are carried out very much on the lines of those of the Tottiyans. Fire is carried to the burning ground by a Chakkiliyan. On the last day of the death

ceremonies (karmāndiram) cooked food, fruits of *Solanum xanthocarpum*, and leaves of *Leucas aspera* are placed on a tray, by the side of which a bit of a culm of *Saccharum arundinaceum*, with leaves of *Cynodon Dactylon* twined round it, is deposited. The tray is taken to a stream, on the bank of which an effigy is made, to which the various articles are offered. A small quantity thereof is placed on arka (*Calotropis gigantea*) leaves, to be eaten by crows. On the return journey to the house, three men, the brother-in-law or father-in-law of the deceased, and two sapindas (agnates) stand in a row at a certain spot. A cloth is stretched before them as a screen, over which they place their right hands. These a washerman touches thrice with *Cynodon* leaves dipped in milk, cow's urine, and turmeric water. The washerman then washes the hands with water. All the agnates place new turbans on their heads, and go back in procession to the village, accompanied by a Urimikkāran and washerman, who must be present throughout the ceremony.

For the following note on the Kāppiliyans of the Kambam valley, in the Madura district, I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. According to a tradition which is current among them, they migrated from their original home in search of new grazing ground for their cattle. The herd, which they brought with them, still lives in its descendants in the valley, which are small, active animals, well known for their trotting powers. It is about a hundred and fifty strong, and is called dēvaru āvu in Canarese, and thambirān mādu in Tamil, both meaning the sacred herd. The cows are never milked, and their calves, when they grow up, are not used for any purpose, except breeding. When the cattle die, they are buried deep in the ground, and not handed

over to Chakkiliyans (leather-workers). One of the bulls goes by the name of pattada āvu, or the king bull. It is selected from the herd by a quaint ceremonial. On an auspicious day, the castemen assemble, and offer incense, camphor, cocoanuts, plantains, and betel to the herd. Meanwhile, a bundle of sugar-cane is placed in front thereof, and the spectators eagerly watch to see which of the bulls will reach it first. The animal which does so is caught hold of, daubed with turmeric, and decorated with flowers, and installed as the king bull. It is styled Nanda Gōpāla, or Venugōpālaswāmi, after Krishna, the divine cattle-grazer, and is an object of adoration by the caste. To meet the expenses of the ceremony, which amount to about two hundred rupees, a subscription is raised among them. The king bull has a special attendant, or driver, whose duties are to graze and worship it. He belongs to the Māragala section of the Endār sub-division of the caste. When he dies, a successor is appointed in the following manner. Before the assembled castemen, pūja (worship) is offered to the sacred herd, and a young boy, "upon whom the god comes," points out a man from among the Māragalas, who becomes the next driver. He enjoys the inams, and is the custodian of the jewels presented to the king bull in former days, and of the copper plates, whereon grants made in its name are engraved. As many as nine of these copper grants were entrusted to the keeping of a youthful driver, about sixteen years old, in 1905. Most of them record grants from unknown kings. One Ponnum Pāndyan, a king of Gudalūr, is recorded as having made grants of land, and other presents to the bull. Others record gifts of land from Ballāla Rāya and Rāma Rāyar. Only the names of the years are recorded. None of the plates contain the saka

dates. Before the annual migration of the herd to the hills during the summer, a ceremony is carried out, to determine whether the king bull is in favour of its going. Two plates, one containing milk, and the other sugar, are placed before the herd. Unless, or until the bull has come up to them, and gone back, the migration does not take place. The driver, or some one deputed to represent him, goes with the herd, which is accompanied by most of the cattle of the neighbouring villages. The driver is said to carry a pot of fresh-drawn milk within a kāvadi (shrine). On the day on which the return journey to the valley is commenced, the pot is opened, and the milk is said to be found in a hardened state. A slice thereof is cut off, and given to each person who accompanied the herd to the hills. It is believed that the milk would not remain in good condition, if the sacred herd had been in any way injuriously affected during its sojourn there. The sacred herd is recruited by certain calves dedicated as members thereof by people of other castes in the neighbourhood of the valley. These calves, born on the 1st of the month Thai (January-February), are dedicated to the god Nandagōpāla, and are known as sanni pasuvu. They are branded on the legs or buttocks, and their ears are slightly torn. They are not used for ploughing or milking, and cannot be sold. They are added to the sacred herd, but the male calves are kept distinct from the male calves thereof. Many miracles are attributed to the successive king bulls. During the fight between the Tottiyans and Kāppiliyans at Dindigul, a king bull left on the rock the permanent imprint of its hoof, which is still believed to be visible. At a subsequent quarrel between the same castes, at Dombachēri, a king bull made the sun turn back in its course, and the shadow

is still pointed under a tamarind tree beneath which arbitration took place. For the assistance rendered by the bull on this occasion, the Māragalas will not use the wood of the tamarind tree, or of the vēla tree, to which the bull was tied, either for fuel or for house-building. The Kāppiliyans have recently (1906) raised Rs. 11,000 by taxing all members of the caste in the Periyakulam tāluk for three years, and have spent this sum in building roomy masonry quarters at Kambam for the sacred herd. Their chief grievance at present is that the same grazing fees are levied on their animals as on mere ordinary cattle, which, they urge, is equivalent to treating gods as equals of men. In the settlement of caste affairs, oaths are taken within the enclosure for the sacred herd.

"Local tradition at Kambam (where a large proportion of the people are Kāppiliyans) says that the Anuppans, another Canarese caste, were in great strength here in olden days, and that quarrels arose between the two bodies, in the course of which the chief of the Kāppiliyans, Rāmachcha Kavundan, was killed. With his dying breath he cursed the Anuppans, and thenceforth they never prospered, and now not one of them is left in the town. A fig tree to the east of the village is shown as marking the place where Rāmachcha's body was burned; near it is the tank, the Rāmachchankulam; and under the bank of this is his math, where his ashes were deposited." *

Kāpu.—The Kāpus or Reddis are the largest caste in the Madras Presidency, numbering more than two millions, and are the great caste of cultivators, farmers, and squireens in the Telugu country. In the Gazetteer of Anantapur they are described as being the great

* Gazetteer of the Madura district.

land-holding body in the Telugu districts, who are held in much respect as substantial, steady-going yeomen, and next to the Brāhmans are the leaders of Hindu Society. In the Salem Manual it is stated that "the Reddis are provident. They spend their money on the land, but are not parsimonious. They are always well dressed, if they can afford it. The gold ornaments worn by the women or the men are of the finest kind of gold. Their houses are always neat and well built, and the Reddis give the idea of good substantial ryots. They live chiefly on rāgi (grain: *Eleusine Coracana*), and are a fine, powerful race." Of proverbs relating to the hereditary occupation of the Reddis, the following may be quoted. "Only a Reddi can cultivate the land, even though he has to drink for every clod turned over." "Those are Reddis who get their living by cultivating the earth." "The Reddi who grows arika (*Paspalum strobiculatum*) can have but one cloth for man and wife."

"The term Kāpu," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,* "means a watchman, and Reddi means a king. The Kāpus or Reddis (Ratti) appear to have been a powerful Dravidian tribe in the early centuries of the Christian era, for they have left traces of their presence at various places in almost every part of India. Though their power has been put down from time to time by the Chālukyas, the Pallavas, and the Bellālas, several families of zamindars came into existence after the captivity of Pratāpa Rudra of Warrangal in A.D. 1323 by the Muhammadan emperor Ghiyas-ud-dīn Toghluk."

Writing in the Manual of the Salem district concerning the Kongu kingdom, the Rev. T. Foulkes states that "the Kongu kingdom claims to have existed from

---

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

about the commencement of the Christian era, and to have continued under its own independent kings down to nearly the end of the ninth century A.D., when it was conquered by the Chola kings of Tanjore, and annexed to their dominions. The earliest portion of the Kongu Chronicle (one of the manuscripts of the Mackenzie collection) gives a series of short notices of the reigns of twenty-eight kings who ruled the country previous to its conquest by the Cholas. These kings belonged to two distinct dynasties: the earlier line was of the solar race, and the later line of the Ganga race. The earlier dynasty had a succession of seven kings of the Ratti tribe, a tribe very extensively distributed, which has at various periods left its mark throughout almost every part of India. This is probably the earliest reference to them as a ruling power, and it is the most southern situation in which they ever held dominion. They disappear in these parts about the end of the second century A.D.; and, in the next historical references to them, we find them high up in the Northern Dakkan, amongst the kingdoms conquered by the Chālukyas about the fourth century A.D. soon after they first crossed the Nerbudda. In the Kongu Chronicle they are stated to be of the solar race: and the genealogies of this tribe accordingly trace them up to Kusha, the second son of Rāma, the hero of the great solar epic of the Hindus; but their claim to this descent is not undisputed. They are, however, sometimes said to be of the lunar race, and of the Yādava tribe, though this latter statement is sometimes confined to the later Rāthors." According to the Rev. T. Foulkes, the name Ratti is found under various forms, *e.g.*, Irattu, Iretti, Radda, Rāhtor, Rathaur, Rāshtra-kūta, Ratta, Reddi, etc.



KAPU.

In a note on the Rāshtrakutas, Mr. J. F. Fleet writes* that "we find that, from the first appearance of the Chalukyas in this part of the country, in the fifth century A.D., the Kanarese districts of the Bombay Presidency were held by them, with short periods of interruption of their power caused by the invasions of the Pallavas and other kings, down to about the early part or the middle of the eighth century A.D. Their sway over this part of the country then ceased entirely for a time. This was due to an invasion by the Rāshtrakuta kings, who, like their predecessors, came from the north . . . . It is difficult to say when there was first a Rāshtrakuta kingdom. The earliest notices that we have of the family are contained in the western Chalukya inscriptions. Thus, the Miraj plates tell us that Jayasimha I, restored the fortunes of the Chalukya dynasty by defeating, among others, one Indra of the Rāshtrakuta family, who was the son of Krishna, and who possessed an army of eight hundred elephants; and there is little doubt that Āppāyika-Govinda, who, as we are told in the Aihole Meguti inscription, came from the north and invaded the Chalukya kingdom with his troops of elephants, and was repulsed by Pulikesi II, also belonged to this same dynasty. It is plain, therefore, that in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D. the Rāshtrakuta dynasty was one of considerable importance in central or in northern India. The later inscriptions state that the Rāshtrakutas were of the Somavamsa or lunar race, and were descendants of Yadu. Dr. Burnell seems inclined to look upon the family as of Dravidian origin, as he gives 'Rāshtra' as an instance of the Sanskritising of Dravidian names, and considers it to be a mythological

* Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts of the Bombay Presidency.

perversion for 'Ratta,' which is the same as the Kanarese and Telugu 'Reddi.' Dr. Bühler is unable to record any opinion as to 'whether the Rāshtrakutas were an Āryan Kshatriya, *i.e.*, Rājput race, which immigrated into the Dekkan from the north like the Chalukyas, or a Drāvidian family which was received into the Āryan community after the conquest of the Dekkan. The earliest inscriptions, at any rate, show them as coming from the north, and, whatever may be their origin, as the word Rāshtrakuta is used in many inscriptions of other dynasties as the equivalent of Rāshtrapati, *i.e.*, as an official word meaning 'the headman or governor of a country or district,' it appears to me that the selection of it as a dynastic name implies that, prior to attaining independent sovereignty, the Rāshtrakutas were feudal chiefs under some previous dynasty, of which they have not preserved any record."

It is a common saying among the Kāpus that they can easily enumerate all the varieties of rice, but it is impossible to give the names of all the sections into which the caste is split up. Some say that there are only fourteen of these, and use the phrase Panta padnālagu kulālu, or Panta and fourteen sections.

The following sub-divisions are recorded by Mr. Stuart * as being the most important :—

Ayōdhya, or Oudh, where Rāma is reputed to have lived. The sub-division is found in Madura and Tinnevelly. They are very proud of their supposed connection with Oudh. At the commencement of the marriage ceremony, the bride's party asks the bridegroom's who they are, and the answer is that they are Ayōdhya Reddis. A similar question is then asked by

---

* *Loc. cit.*, and Manual of the North Arcot district.

the bridegroom's party, and the bride's friends reply that they are Mithila Reddis.

Balija. The chief Telugu trading caste. Many of the Balijas are now engaged in cultivation, and this accounts for so many having returned Kāpu as their main caste, for Kāpu is a common Telugu word for a ryot or cultivator. It is not improbable that there was once a closer connection than now between the Kāpus and Balijas.

Bhūmanchi (good earth).

Dēsūr. Possibly residents originally of a place called Dēsūr, though some derive the word from dēha, body, and sūra, valour, saying that they were renowned for their courage.

Gandi Kottai. Found in Madura and Tinnevelly. Named after Gandi Kōta in the Ceded districts, whence they are said to have emigrated southward.

Gāzula (glass bangle makers). A sub-division of the Balijas. They are said to have two sections, called Nāga (cobra) and Tābēlu (tortoise), and, in some places, to keep their women gōsha.

Kammapuri. These seem to be Kammas, who, in some places, pass as Kāpus. Some Kammas, for example, who have settled in the city of Madras, call themselves Kāpu or Reddi.

Morasa. A sub-division of the Vakkaligas. The Verala icche Kāpulu, or Kāpus who give the fingers, have a custom which requires that, when a grandchild is born in a family, the wife of the eldest son of the grandfather must have the last two joints of the third and fourth fingers of her right hand amputated at a temple of Bhairava.

Nerati, Nervati, or Neradu. Most numerous in Kurnool, and the Ceded districts.

Oraganti. Said to have formerly worked in the salt-pans. The name is possibly a corruption of Warangal, capital of the Pratāpa Rudra.

Pākanāti. Those who come from the eastern country (prāk nādu).

Palle. In some places, the Pallis who have settled in the Telugu country call themselves Palle Kāpulu, and give as their gōtra Jambumāha Rishi, which is the gōtra of the Pallis. Though they do not intermarry with the Kāpus, the Palle Kāpulu may interdine with them.

Panta (Panta, a crop). The largest sub-division of all.

Pedaganti or Pedakanti. By some said to be named after a place called Pedagallu. By others the word is said to be derived from peda, turned aside, and kamma eye, indicating one who turns his eyes away from the person who speaks to him. Another suggestion is that it means stiff-necked. The Pedakantis are said to be known by their arrogance.

The following legend is narrated in the Baramahal Records.* "On a time, the Guru or Patriarch came near a village, and put up in a neighbouring grove until he sent in a Dāsari to apprize his sectaries of his approach. The Dāsari called at the house of one of them, and announced the arrival of the Guru, but the master of the house took no notice of him, and, to avoid the Guru, he ran away through the back door of the house, which is called peradu, and by chance came to the grove, and was obliged to pay his respects to the Guru, who asked if he had seen his Dāsari, and he answered that he had been all day from home. On which, the Guru sent for the Dāsari, and demanded the

* Section III, Inhabitants, Madras Government Press, 1907.

reason of his staying away so long, when he saw the master of the house was not in it. The Dāsari replied that the person was at home when he went there, but that, on seeing him, he fled through the back door, which the Guru finding true, he surnamed him the Peratiguntavaru or the runaway through the back door, now corruptly called Perdagantuwaru, and said that he would never honour him with another visit, and that he and his descendants should henceforth have no Guru or Patriarch."

Pōkanādu (pōka, areca palm: *Areca Catechu*).

Velanāti. Kāpus from a foreign (veli) country.

Yerlam.

"The last division," Mr. Stuart writes, "are the most peculiar of all, and are partly of Brāhmanical descent. The story goes that a Brāhman girl named Yerlamma, not having been married by her parents in childhood, as she should have been, was for that reason turned out of her caste. A Kāpu, or some say a Besta man, took compassion on her, and to him she bore many children, the ancestors of the Yerlam Kāpu caste. In consequence of the harsh treatment of Yerlamma by her parents and caste people, all her descendants hate Brāhmans with a deadly hatred, and look down upon them, affecting also to be superior to every other caste. They are most exclusive, refusing to eat with any caste whatever, or even to take chunam (lime for chewing with betel) from any but their own people, whereas Brāhmans will take lime from a Sūdra, provided a little curd be mixed with it. The Yerlam Kāpus do not employ priests of the Brāhman or other religious classes even for their marriages. At these no hōmam (sacred fire) ceremony is performed, and no worship offered to Vignēswara, but they simply ascertain a fortunate day

and hour, and get an old matron (sumangali) to tie the tāli to the bride's neck, after which there is feasting and merry-making."

The Panta Kāpus are said to be divided into two tegas or endogamous divisions, viz., Peramā Reddi or Muduru Kāpu (ripe or old Kāpu); and Kātama Reddi or Letha Kāpu (young or unripe Kāpus). A sub-division called Konda (hill) Kāpus is mentioned by the Rev. J. Cain * as being engaged in cultivation and the timber trade in the eastern ghāts near the Godāvari river (*see* Konda Dora). Ākula (betel-leaf seller) was returned at the census, 1901, as a sub-caste of Kāpus.

In the Census Report, 1891, Kāpu (indicating cultivator), is given as a sub-division of Chakkiliyans, Dommaras, Gadabas, Savaras and Tēlis. It further occurs as a sub-division of Mangala. Some Marātha cultivators in the Telugu country are known as Arē Kāpu. The Konda Doras are also called Konda Kāpus. In the Census Report, 1901, Pandu is returned as a Tamil synonym, and Kāmpo as an Oriya form of Kāpu.

Reddi is the usual title of the Kāpus, and is the title by which the village munsiff is called in the Telugu country, regardless of the caste to which he may belong. Reddi also occurs as a sub-division of cultivating Linga Balijas, Telugu Vadukans or Vadugans in the Tamil country, Velamas, and Yānādis. It is further given as a name for Kavarais engaged in agriculture, and as a title of the Kallangi sub-division of Pallis, and Sādars. The name Sambuni Reddi is adopted by some Palles engaged as fishermen.

As examples of exogamous septs among the Kāpus, the following may be cited :—

---

* Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

Avula, cow.	Mēkala, goats.
Alla, grain.	Kānugala, *Pongamia glabra.*
Bandi, cart.	Mungāru, woman's skirt.
Barrelu, buffaloes.	Nāgali, plough.
Dandu, army.	Tangēdu, *Cassia auriculata.*
Gorre, sheep.	Udumala, *Varanus bengalensis.*
Gudise, hut.	Varige, *Setaria italica.*
Guntaka, harrow.	Yeddulu, bulls.
Kōdla, fowl.	Yēnuga, elephant.

At Conjeeveram, some Panta Reddis have true totemistic septs, of which the following are examples:—

Magili (*Pandanus fascicularis*). Women do not, like women of other castes, use the flower-bracts for the purpose of adorning themselves. A man has been known to refuse to purchase some bamboo mats, because they were tied with the fibre of this tree.

Ippi (*Bassia longifolia*). The tree, and its products, must not be touched.

Mancham (cot). They avoid sleeping on cots.

Arigala (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*). The grain is not used as food.

Chintaginjalu (tamarind seeds). The seeds may not be touched, or used.

Puccha (*Citrullus vulgaris;* water melon). The fruit may not be eaten.

The Pichigunta vandlu, a class of mendicants who beg chiefly from Kāpus and Gollas, manufacture pedigrees and gōtras for these castes and the Kammas.

Concerning the origin of the Kāpus, the following legend is current. During the reign of Pratāpa Rudra, the wife of one Belthi Reddi secured by severe penance a brilliant ear ornament (kamma) from the sun. This was stolen by the King's minister, as the King was very anxious to secure it for his wife. Belthi Reddi's wife told her sons to recover it, but her eldest son refused to have anything to do with the matter, as the King was involved in it. The second son likewise refused,

and used foul language. The third son promised to secure it, and, hearing this, one of his brothers ran away. Finally the ornament was recovered by the youngest son. The Panta Kāpus are said to be descended from the eldest son, the Pākanātis from the second, the Velamas from the son who ran away, and the Kammas from the son who secured the jewel.

The Kāpus are said to have originally dwelt in Ayōdhya. During the reign of Bharata, one Pillala Mari Belthi Reddi and his sons deceived the King by appropriating all the grain to themselves, and giving him the straw. The fraud was detected by Rāma when he assumed charge of the kingdom, and, as a punishment, he ordered the Kāpus to bring *Cucurbita* (pumpkin) fruits for the srādh (death ceremony) of Dasarātha. They accordingly cultivated the plant, but, before the ceremony took place, all the plants were uprooted by Hanumān, and no fruits were forthcoming. In lieu thereof, they promised to offer gold equal in weight to that of the pumpkin, and brought all of which they were possessed. This they placed in the scales, but it was not sufficient to counterbalance a pumpkin against which it was weighed. To make up the deficiency in weight, the Kāpu women removed their bottus (marriage badges), and placed them in the scales. Since that time women of the Mōtāti and Pedakanti sections have substituted a cotton string dyed with turmeric for the bottu. It is worthy of notice that a similar legend is current among the Vakkaligas (cultivators) of Mysore, who, instead of giving up the bottu, seem to have abandoned the cultivation of the *Cucurbita* plant. The exposure of the fraud led Belthi Reddi to leave Ayōdhya with one of his wives and seventy-seven children, leaving behind thirteen wives. In the course of their journey, they had



PANTA KAPU.

to cross the Silānadi (petrifying river), and, if they passed through the water, they would have become petrified. So they went to a place called Dhonakonda, and, after worshipping Ganga, the head of the idol was cut off, and brought to the river bank. The waters, like those of the Red Sea in the time of Pharaoh, were divided, and the Kāpus crossed on dry ground. In commemoration of this event, the Kāpus still worship Ganga during their marriage ceremonies. After crossing the river, the travellers came to the temple of Mallikarjuna, and helped the Jangams in the duties of looking after it. Some time afterwards the Jangams left the place for a time, and placed the temple in charge of the Kāpus. On their return, the Kāpus refused to hand over charge to them, and it was decided that whoever should go to Nāgalōkam (the abode of snakes), and bring back Nāga Malligai (jasmine from snake-land), should be considered the rightful owner of the temple. The Jangams, who were skilled in the art of transformation, leaving their mortal frames, went in search of the flower in the guise of spirits. Taking advantage of this, the Kāpus burnt the bodies of the Jangams, and, when the spirits returned, there were no bodies for them to enter. Thereon the god of the temple became angry, and transformed the Jangams into crows, which attacked the Kāpus, who fled to the country of Oraganti Pratāpa Rudra. As this King was a Sakti worshipper, the crows ceased to harass the Kāpus, who settled down as cultivators. Of the produce of the land, nine-tenths were to be given to the King, and the Kāpus were to keep a tithe. At this time the wife of Belthi Reddi was pregnant, and she asked her sons what they would give to the son who was about to be born. They all promised to give him half their earnings. The child grew into a learned man and poet, and one day carried

water to the field where his brothers were at work. The vessel containing the water was only a small one, and there was not enough water for all. But he prayed to Sarasvati, with whose aid the vessel was always filled up. Towards evening, the grain collected during the day was heaped together, with a view to setting apart the share for the King. But a dispute arose among the brothers, and it was decided that only a tithe should be given to him. The King, being annoyed with the Kāpus for not giving him his proper share, waited for an opportunity to bring disgrace on Belthi Reddi, and sought the assistance of a Jangam, who managed to become the servant of Belthi Reddi's wife. After some time, he picked up her kamma when it fell off while she was asleep, and handed it over to Pratāpa Rudra, who caused it to be proclaimed that he had secured the ornament as a preliminary to securing the person of its owner. The eldest son of Belthi Reddi, however, recovered the kamma in a fight with the King, during which he carried his youngest brother on his back. From him the Kammas are descended. The Velamas are descended from the sons who ran away, and the Kāpus from those who would neither fight nor run away.

Pollution at the first menstrual ceremony lasts, I am informed, for sixteen days. Every day, both morning and evening, a dose of gingelly (*Sesamum*) oil is administered to the girl, and, if it produces much purging, she is treated with buffalo ghī (clarified butter). On alternate days water is poured over her head, and from the neck downwards. The cloth which she wears, whether new or old, becomes the property of the washerwoman. On the first day the meals consist of milk and dhāl (*Cajanus indicus*), but on subsequent days cakes, etc., are allowed.

In their marriage ceremonial, the Panta Reddis of the South Arcot and Salem districts appear to follow the Brāhmanical form. In the Telugu country, however, it is as follows. On the pradhānam or betrothal day, the party of the bridegroom-elect go in procession under a canopy (ulladam), attended by musicians, and matrons carrying betel, cocoanuts, date and plantain fruits, and turmeric on plates. As soon as they have arrived at the courtyard of the future bride's house, she seats herself on a plank. A Brāhman purōhit moulds a little turmeric paste into a conical mass representing Vignēswara (the elephant god), and it is worshipped by the girl, in front of whom the trays brought by the women are placed. She is presented with a new cloth, which she puts on, and a near female relation gives her three handfuls of areca nuts, a few betel leaves, and the bride-price and jewels tied up in a turmeric-dyed cloth. All these things the girl deposits in her lap. The fathers of the contracting couple then exchange betel, with the customary formula. "The girl is yours, and the money mine" and "The money is yours, and the girl mine." Early on the wedding morning the bride-groom's party, accompanied by a purōhit and washerman (Tsākala), go to fetch the bride from her house. The milk-post is set up, and is usually made of a branch of *Mimusops hexandra* or, in the Tamil country, *Odina Wodier*. On the conclusion of the marriage rites, the *Odina* post is planted in the backyard, and, if it takes root and flourishes, it is regarded as a happy omen for the newly married couple. A small party of Kāpus, taking with them some food and gingelly (*Sesamum*) oil, proceed in procession beneath a canopy to the house of a washerman (Tsākala), in order to obtain from him a framework made of bamboo or sticks over which

cotton threads are wound (dhornam), and the Ganga idol, which is kept in his custody. The food is presented to him, and some rice poured into his cloth. Receiving these things, he says that he cannot find the dhornam and idol without a torch-light, and demands gingelly oil. This is given to him, and the Kāpus return with the washerman carrying the dhornam and idol to the marriage house. When they arrive at the entrance thereto, red coloured food, coloured water (ārathi) and incense are waved before the idol, which is taken into a room, and placed on a settle of rice. The washerman is then asked to tie the dhornam to the pandal (marriage booth) or roof of the house, and he demands some paddy, which is heaped up on the ground. Standing thereon, he ties the dhornam. The people next proceed to the houses of the goldsmith and potter, and bring back the bottu (marriage badge) and thirteen marriage pots, on which threads (kankanam) are tied before they are removed. A Brāhman purōhit ties the thread round one pot, and the Kāpus round the rest. The pots are placed in the room along with the Ganga idol. The bottu is tied round the neck of a married woman who is closely related to the bridegroom. The contracting couple are seated with the ends of their clothes tied together. A barber comes with a cup of water, and a tray containing rice dyed with turmeric is placed on the floor. A number of men and women then scatter rice over the heads of the bride and bridegroom, and, after waving a silver or copper coin in front of them, throw it into the barber's cup. The barber then pares the finger and toe nails of the bridegroom, and touches the toe nails of the bride with his razor. They then go through the nalagu ceremony, being smeared with oil and *Phaseolus Mungo* paste, and bathe. After the bath



KĀPU BRIDE AND BRIDEGROOM.

the bridegroom, dressed in his wedding finery, proceeds to the temple. As he leaves the house, a Mādiga hands him a pair of shoes, which he puts on. The Mādiga is given food placed in a basket on eleven leaves. At the temple worship is performed, and a Bhatrāzu (bard and panegyrist), who has accompanied the bridegroom, ties a bāshingham (chaplet) on his forehead. From this moment the Bhatrāzu must remain with the bridegroom, as his personal attendant, painting the sectarian marks on his forehead, and carrying out other functions. In like manner, a Bhōgam woman (dedicated prostitute) waits on the bride. "The tradition," Mr. Stuart writes, "is that the Bhatrāzus were a northern caste, which was first invited south by king Pratāpa Rudra of the Kshatriya dynasty of Warrangal (1295–1323 A.D.). After the downfall of that kingdom they seem to have become court bards and panegyrists under the Reddi and Velama feudal chiefs." From the temple the bridegroom and his party come to the marriage pandal, and, after food and other things have been waved to avert the evil eye, he enters the house. On the threshold his brother-in-law washes his feet, and sits thereon till he has extracted some money or a cow as a present. The bridegroom then goes to the marriage dais, whither the bride is conducted, and stands facing him, with a screen interposed between them. Vignēswara is worshipped, and the wrist threads (kankanam) are tied on, the bridegroom placing his right foot on the left foot of the bride. The bottu is removed from the neck of the married woman, passed round to be blessed, and tied by the bridegroom on the bride's neck. The bride is lifted up by her maternal uncle, and the couple sprinkle each other with rice. The screen is removed, and they sit side by side with the ends of their cloths tied together. Rice is

thrown over them by those assembled, and they are made to gaze at the pole star (Arundati). The proceedings terminate by the pair searching for a finger-ring and pap-bowl in one of the pots filled with water. On the second day there is feasting, and the nalagu ceremony is again performed. On the following day, the bridegroom and his party pretend to take offence at some thing which is done by the bride's people, who follow them with presents, and a reconciliation is speedily effected. Towards evening, a ceremony called nāgavali, or sacrifice to the Dēvatas, is performed. The bridal pair, with the Bhatrāzu and Bhōgam woman, occupy the dais. The Brāhman purōhit places on a tray a conical mass of turmeric representing Vignēswara, to whom pūja (worship) is done. He then places a brass vessel (kalasam) filled with water, and with its mouth closed by a cocoanut, on a settle of rice spread on a tray. The kalasam is worshipped as representing the Dēvatas. The Brāhman invokes the blessing of all the Gods and Dēvatas, saying "Let Siva bless the pair," "Let Indra bless the pair," etc. A near relative of the bridegroom sits by the side of the purōhit with plenty of betel leaves and areca nuts. After each God or Dēvata has been mentioned, he throws some of the nuts and leaves into a tray, and, as these are the perquisites of the purōhit, he may repeat the same name three or four times. The Kāpu then makes playful remarks about the greed of the purōhit, and, amid much laughter, refuses to put any more leaves or nuts in the tray. This ceremonial concluded, the near relations of the bridegroom stand in front of him, and, with hands crossed, hold over his head two brass plates, into which a small quantity of milk is poured. Fruit, betel leaves and areca nuts (pān-supāri) are next distributed in a recognised order of

precedence. The first presentation is made to the house god, the second to the family priest, and the third to the Brāhman purōhit. If a Pākanāti Kāpu is present, he must receive his share immediately after the Brāhman, and before other Kāpus, Kammas, and others. Before it is presented to each person, the leaves and nuts are touched by the bridegroom, and the hand of the bride is placed on them by the Bhōgam woman. At a Panta Kāpu wedding, the Ganga idol, together with a goat and a kāvadi (bamboo pole with baskets of rice, cakes, betel leaves and areca nuts), is carried in procession to a pond or temple. The washerman, dressed up as a woman, heads the procession, and keeps on dancing and singing till the destination is reached. The idol is placed inside a rude triangular hut made of three sheaves of straw, and the articles brought in the baskets are spread before it. On the heap of rice small lumps of flour paste are placed, and these are made into lights by scooping out cavities, and feeding the wicks with ghī (clarified butter). One of the ears of the goat is then cut, and it is brought near the food. This done, the lights are extinguished, and the assembly returns home without the least noise. The washerman takes charge of the idol, and goes his way. If the wedding is spread over five days, the Ganga idol is removed on the fourth day, and the customary mock-ploughing ceremony performed on the fifth. The marriage ceremonies close with the removal of the threads from the wrists of the newly married couple. Among the Panta Reddis of the Tamil country, the Ganga idol is taken in procession by the washerman two or three days before the marriage, and he goes to every Reddi house, and receives a present of money. The idol is then set up in the verandah, and worshipped daily till the conclusion of the marriage ceremonies. "Among

the Reddis of Tinnevelly," Dr. J. Shortt writes, "a young woman of sixteen or twenty years of age is frequently married to a boy of five or six years, or even of a more tender age. After marriage she, the wife, lives with some other man, a near relative on the maternal side, frequently an uncle, and sometimes with the boy-husband's own father. The progeny so begotten are affiliated on the boy-husband. When he comes of age, he finds his wife an old woman, and perhaps past child-bearing. So he, in his turn, contracts a *liaison* with some other boy's wife, and procreates children." The custom has doubtless been adopted in imitation of the Maravans, Kallans, Agamudaiyans, and other castes, among whom the Reddis have settled. In an account of the Ayōdhya Reddis of Tinnevelly, Mr. Stuart writes that it is stated that "the tāli is peculiar, consisting of a number of cotton threads besmeared with turmeric, without any gold ornament. They have a proverb that he who went forth to procure a tāli and a cloth never returned." This proverb is based on the following legend. In days of yore a Reddi chief was about to be married, and he accordingly sent for a goldsmith, and, desiring him to make a splendid tāli, gave him the price of it in advance. The smith was a drunkard, and neglected his work. The day for the celebration of the marriage arrived, but there was no tāli. Whereupon the old chief, plucking a few threads from his garment, twisted them into a cord, and tied it round the neck of the bride, and this became a custom.*

In the Census Report, 1891, Mr. Stuart states that he was informed that polyandry of the fraternal type exists among the Panta Kāpus, but the statement

---

* J. F. Kearns. Kalyāna shatanku.

requires verification. I am unable to discover any trace of this custom, and it appears that Reddi Yānādis are employed by Panta Reddis as domestic servants. If a Reddi Yānādi's husband dies, abandons, or divorces his wife, she may marry his brother. And, in the case of separation or divorce, the two brothers will live on friendly terms with each other.

In the Indian Law Reports * it is noted that the custom of illatom,† or affiliation of a son-in-law, obtains among the Mōtāti Kāpus in Bellary and Kurnool, and the Pedda Kāpus in Nellore. He who has at the time no son, although he may have more than one daughter, and whether or no he is hopeless of having male issue, may exercise the right of taking an illatom son-in-law. For the purposes of succession this son-in-law stands in the place of a son, and, in competition with natural-born sons, takes an equal share.‡

According to the Kurnool Manual (1886), "the Pakanādus of Pattikonda and Rāmallakōta tāluks allow a widow to take a second husband from among the caste-men. She can wear no signs of marriage, such as the tāli, glass bangles, and the like, but she as well as her husband is allowed to associate with the other caste-men on equal terms. Their progeny inherit their father's property equally with children born in regular wedlock, but they generally intermarry with persons similarly circumstanced. Their marriage with the issue of a regularly married couple is, however, not prohibited. It is matter for regret that this privilege of remarrying is

---

* Madras Series, IV, 1882 ; VI, 1883.

† Illatakaru, a bride's father having no son, and adopting his son-in-law.

‡ *See* further C. Ramachendrier. Collection of Decisions of High Courts and the Privy Council applicable to dancing-girls, illatom affiliation, etc., Madras, 1892.

much abused, as among the Linga Balijas. Not unfrequently it extends to pregnant widows also, and so widows live in adultery with a caste-man without fear of excommunication, encouraged by the hope of getting herself united to him or some other caste-man in the event of pregnancy. In many cases, caste-men are hired for the purpose of going through the forms of marriage simply to relieve such widows from the penalty of excommunication from caste. The man so hired plays the part of husband for a few days, and then goes away in accordance with his secret contract." The abuse of widow marriage here referred to is said to be uncommon, though it is sometimes practiced among Kāpus and other castes in out-of-the-way villages. It is further noted in the Kurnool Manual that Pedakanti Kāpu women do not wear the tāli, or a bodice (ravika) to cover their breasts. And the tight-fitting bodice is said * to be "far less universal in Anantapur than Bellary, and, among some castes (*e.g.*, certain subdivisions of the Kāpus and Īdigas), it is not worn after the first confinement."

In the disposal of their dead, the rites among the Kāpus of the Telugu country are very similar to those of the Kammas and Balijas. The Panta Reddis of the Tamil country, however, follow the ceremonial in vogue among various Tamil castes. The news of a death in the community is conveyed by a Paraiyan Tōti (sweeper). The dead man's son receives a measure containing a light from a barber, and goes three times round the corpse. At the burning-ground the barber, instead of the son, goes thrice round the corpse, carrying a pot containing water, and followed by the son, who makes

* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district.

holes therein. The stream of water which trickles out is sprinkled over the corpse. The barber then breaks the pot into very small fragments. If the fragments were large, water might collect in them, and be drunk by birds, which would bring sickness (pakshidhōsham) on children, over whose heads they might pass. On the day after the funeral, a Panisavan or barber extinguishes the fire, and collects the ashes together. A washerman brings a basket containing various articles required for worship, and, after pūja has been performed, a plant of *Leucas aspera* is placed on the ashes. The bones are collected in a new pot, and thrown into a river, or consigned by parcel-post to an agent at Benares, and thrown into the Ganges.

By religion the Kāpus are both Vaishnavites and Saivites, and they worship a variety of deities, such as Thāllamma, Nāgarapamma, Putlamma, Ankamma, Munēswara, Pōleramma, Dēsamma. To Munēswara and Dēsamma pongal (cooked rice) is offered, and buffaloes are sacrificed to Pōleramma. Even Mātangi, the goddess of the Mādigas, is worshipped by some Kāpus. At purificatory ceremonies a Mādiga (Basavi) woman, called Mātangi, is sent for, and cleanses the house or its inmates from pollution by sprinkling and spitting out toddy.

From an interesting note * on agricultural ceremonies in the Bellary district, the following extract is taken. "On the first full-moon day in the month of Bhādrapada (September), the agricultural population celebrate a feast called the Jokumāra feast, to appease the rain-god. The Bārikas (women), who are a sub-division of the Kabbēra caste belonging to the Gaurimakkalu section,

* Madras Mail, Nov. 1905.

go round the town or village in which they live, with a basket on their heads containing margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves, flowers of various kinds, and holy ashes. They beg alms, especially of the cultivating classes (Kāpus), and, in return for the alms bestowed (usually grain and food), they give some of the margosa leaves, flowers, and ashes. The Kāpus take these to their fields, prepare cholam (millet : *Sorghum*) gruel, mix them with it, and sprinkle the kanji or gruel all round their fields. After this, the Kāpu proceeds to the potter's kiln, fetches ashes from it, and makes a figure of a human being. This figure is placed prominently in some convenient spot in the field, and is called Jokumāra or rain-god. It is supposed to have the power of bringing down the rain in proper time. The figure is sometimes small, and sometimes big. A second kind of Jokumāra worship is called muddam, or outlining of rude representations of human figures with powdered charcoal. These representations are made in the early morning, before the bustle of the day commences, on the ground at cross-roads and along thoroughfares. The Bārikas who draw these figures are paid a small remuneration in money or in kind. The figure represents Jokumāra, who will bring down rain when insulted by people treading on him. Another kind of Jokumāra worship also prevails in this district. When rain fails, the Kāpu females model a figure of a naked human being of small size. They place this figure in an open mock palanquin, and go from door to door singing indecent songs, and collecting alms. They continue this procession for three or four days, and then abandon the figure in a field adjacent to the village. The Mālas then take possession of this abandoned Jokumāra, and in their turn go about singing indecent songs and collecting alms for three or

four days, and then throw it away in some jungle. This form of Jokumāra worship is also believed to bring down plenty of rain. There is another simple superstition among these Kāpu females. When rain fails, the Kāpu females catch hold of a frog, and tie it alive to a new winnowing fan made of bamboo. On this fan, leaving the frog visible, they spread a few margosa leaves, and go singing from door to door 'Lady frog must have her bath. Oh! rain-god, give a little water for her at least.' This means that the drought has reached such a stage that there is not even a drop of water for the frogs. When the Kāpu woman sings this song, the woman of the house brings a little water in a vessel, pours it over the frog which is left on the fan outside the door, and gives some alms. The woman of the house is satisfied that such an action will soon bring down rain in torrents."

In the Kāpu community, women play an important part, except in matters connected with agriculture. This is accounted for by a story to the effect that, when they came from Ayōdhya, the Kāpus brought no women with them, and sought the assistance of the gods in providing them with wives. They were told to marry women who were the illegitimate issue of Pāndavas, and the women consented on the understanding that they were to be given the upper hand, and that menial service, such as husking paddy (rice), cleaning vessels, and carrying water, should be done for them. They accordingly employ Gollas and Gamallas, and, in the Tamil country, Pallis as domestic servants. Mālas and Mādigas freely enter Kāpu houses for the purpose of husking paddy, but are not allowed into the kitchen, or room in which the household gods are worshipped.

In some Kāpu houses, bundles of ears of paddy may be seen hung up as food for sparrows, which are held

in esteem. The hopping of sparrows is said to resemble the gait of a person confined in fetters, and there is a legend that the Kāpus were once in chains, and the sparrows set them at liberty, and took the bondage on themselves.

It has been noted * by Mr. C. K. Subbha Rao, of the Agricultural Department, that the Reddis and others, who migrated southward from the Telugu country, " occupy the major portion of the black cotton soil of the Tamil country. There is a strange affinity between the Telugu cultivators and black cotton soil; so much so that, if a census was taken of the owners of such soil in the Tamil districts of Coimbatore, Trichinopoly, Madura, and Tinnevelly, ninety per cent. would no doubt prove to be Vadugars (northerners), or the descendants of Telugu immigrants. So great is the attachment of the Vadugan to the black cotton soil that the Tamilians mock him by saying that, when god offered paradise to the Vadugan, the latter hesitated, and enquired whether there was black cotton soil there."

In a note on the Pongala or Pōkanāti and Panta Reddis of the Trichinopoly district, Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes as follows. " Both speak Telugu, but they differ from each other in their customs, live in separate parts of the country, and will neither intermarry nor interdine. The Reddis will not eat on equal terms with any other Sūdra caste, and will accept separate meals only from the vegetarian section of the Vellālas. They are generally cultivators, but they had formerly rather a bad reputation for crime, and it is said that some of them are receivers of stolen property. Like various other castes, they have beggars, called Bavani Nāyakkans,

* Madras Mail, 1905.

attached to them, who beg from no other caste, and whose presence is necessary when they worship their caste goddess. The Chakkiliyans are also attached to them, and play a prominent part in the marriages of the Panta sub-division. Formerly, a Chakkiliyan was deputed to ascertain the status of the other party before the match was arranged, and his dreams were considered as omens of its desirability. He was also honoured at the marriage by being given the first betel and nuts. Nowadays he precedes the bridegroom's party with a basket of fruit, to announce its coming. A Chakkiliyan is also often deputed to accompany a woman on a journey. The caste goddess of the Reddis is Yellamma, whose temple is at Esanai in Perambalūr, and she is reverenced by both Pantas and Pongalas. The latter observe rather gruesome rites, including the drinking of a kid's blood. The Pantas also worship Rengayiamman and Pōlayamman with peculiar ceremonies. The women are the principal worshippers, and, on one of the nights after Pongal, they unite to do reverence to these goddesses, a part of the ritual consisting in exposing their persons. With this may be compared the Sevvaipillayar rite celebrated in honour of Ganēsa by Vellāla woman (*see* Vellāla). Both divisions of Reddis wear the sacred thread at funerals. Neither of them allow divorcées or widows to marry again. The women of the two divisions can be easily distinguished by their appearance. The Panta Reddis wear a characteristic gold ear-ornament called kammal, a flat nose-ring studded with inferior rubies, and a golden wire round the neck, on which both the tāli and the pottu are tied. They are of fairer complexion than the Pongala women. The Panta women are allowed a great deal of freedom, which is usually ascribed to their dancing-girl origin, and are said to rule

their husbands in a manner rare in other castes. They are often called dēvadiya (dancing-girl) Reddis, and it is said that, though the men of the caste receive hospitality from the Reddis of the north country, their women are not invited. Their chastity is said to be frail, and their lapses easily condoned by their husbands. The Pongalas are equally lax about their wives, but are said to rigorously expel girls or widows who misconduct themselves, and their seducers as well. However, the Panta men and women treat each other with a courtesy that is probably to be found in no other caste, rising and saluting each other, whatever their respective ages, whenever they meet. The purification ceremony for a house defiled by the unchastity of a maid or widow is rather an elaborate affair. Formerly a Kolakkāran (huntsman), a Tottiyan, a priest of the village goddess, a Chakkiliyan, and a Bavani Nāyakkan had to be present. The Tottiyan is now sometimes dispensed with. The Kolakkāran and the Bavani Nāyakkan burn some kāmācchi grass (*Andropogon Schœnanthus*), and put the ashes in three pots of water. The Tottiyan then worships Pillayar (Ganēsa) in the form of some turmeric, and pours the turmeric into the water. The members of the polluted household then sit in a circle, while the Chakkiliyan carries a black kid round the circle. He is pursued by the Bavani Nāyakkan, and both together cut off the animal's head, and bury it. The guilty parties have then to tread on the place where the head is buried, and the turmeric and ash water is poured over them. This ceremony rather resembles the one performed by the Ūrālis. The Pantas are said to have no caste panchāyats (council), whereas the Pongalas recognise the authority of officers called Kambalakkārans and Kottukkārans who uphold discipline."

The following are some of the proverbs relating to the Kāpus :—

The Kāpu protects all.

The Kāpu's difficulties are known only to god.

The Kāpu dies from even the want of food.

The Kāpu knows not the distinction between daughter and daughter-in-law (*i.e.*, both must work for him).

The Karnam (village accountant) is the cause of the Kāpu's death.

The Kāpu goes not to the fort (*i.e.*, into the presence of the Rāja). A modern variant is that the Kāpu goes not to the court (of law).

While the Kāpu was sluggishly ploughing, thieves stole the rope collars.

The year the Kāpu came in, the famine came too.

The Reddis are those who will break open the soil to fill their bellies.

When the unpracticed Reddi got into a palanquin, it swung from side to side.

The Reddi who had never mounted a horse sat with his face to the tail.

The Reddi fed his dog like a horse, and barked himself.

Kāradhi.—A name sometimes given to Māri Holeyas.

Karadi (bear).—An exogamous sept of Tottiyan.

Kāraikkāt.—Kāraikkāt, Kāraikkātar, or Kārkātta, meaning those who waited for rain, or, according to another version, those who saved or protected the clouds, is an endogamous division of Vellāla. Some Tamil Malayālis, who claim to be Vellālas who emigrated to the hills from Conjeeveram, have, at times of census, returned themselves as Kāraikkāt Vellālas.

Karaiturai (sea-coast) Vellāla.—A name assumed by some Pattanavans.

Karaiyālan (ruler of the coast).—A title of Maravans, also taken by some Idaiyans.

Karaiyān.—A name for Tamil sea-fishermen, who live on the coast (karai). The fishing section of the Palles is known as Palle Kariyālu. *See* Pattanavan.

Kārālan.—In the Census Report, 1891, the Kārālans (rulers of clouds) are returned as a tribe of hunters and cultivators found in the hills of Salem and South Arcot. In the Report, 1901, Kārālan is given as a synonym for Vellāla in Malabar, and also as a name for Malayālis. At the census, 1901, many of the Malayālis of the Shevaroy hills in the Salem district returned themselves as Vellālas and Kārālans. And the divisions returned by the Kārālans, *e.g.*, Kolli, Pacchai, Periya, and Perianan, connect them with these Malayālis (*q.v.*).

Karepāku.—Karepāku or Karuvepilai is a name for Koravas, who hawk for sale leaves of the curry-leaf plant (*Murraya Kœnigii*).

Karichcha.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nāyar.

Karimbarabannaya (sugar-cane sept).—An exogamous sept of Kēlasi.

Karimpālan.—The Karimpālans are a small hunting and cultivating forest tribe in Malabar. They are "punam (shifting) cultivators, hewers of wood, and collectors of wild pepper, and are found in all the foot hills north of the Camel's Hump. They wear the kudumi (hair knot), and are said to follow the marumakkatāyam system of inheritance in the female line, but they do not perform the tāli kettu ceremony. They are supposed to have the power of exorcising the demon Karuvilli, possession by whom takes the form of fever." *

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district.

Kariya.—A sub-division of Kudubi.

Karkadabannaya (scorpion sept).—An exogamous sept of Bant.

Karkatta.—A synonym of Kāraikāttu Vellāla.

Karna.—A sub-division of Golla, and an exogamous sept of Māla.

Karnabattu.—The Karnabattus, or Karnabhatus, are a Telugu weaving caste, found chiefly in the Godāvari district. The story goes that there once lived a king, who ruled over a portion of the country now included in this district, and was worried by a couple of demons, who carried off some of his subjects for their daily food. The king prayed Siva for deliverance from them, and the god, being gratified at his devotion to him, produced nine persons from his ears, and ordered them to slay the demons. This they did, and their descendants are the Karnabhatus, or ear soldiers. By religion, the Karnabattus are either ordinary Saivites or Lingāyats. When a girl reaches maturity, she remains under a pollution for sixteen days. Early marriage is the rule, and a Brāhman officiates at weddings. The dead, as among other Lingāyats, are buried in a sitting posture. The caste is organised in the same manner as the Sālēs, and, at each place, there is a headman called Kulampedda or Jātipedda, corresponding to the Sēnāpathi of the Sālēs. They weave coarse cloths, which are inferior in texture to those manufactured by Patta Sālēs and Sīlēvantas.

In a note on the Karnabattus, Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes that " though a low caste, they forbid the remarriage of widows. But the remark in the Census Report (1901) that they abstain from meat is not true of the Karnabattus questioned, who admitted that they would eat even pork. Their special deity is Somēsvara, whom they unite to worship on the new-moon day of Pushyam

(January-February). The god is represented by a mud idol made for the occasion. The pūjāri (priest) throws flowers over it in token of adoration, and sits before it with his hands outstretched and his mouth closed until one of the flowers falls into his hands."

The Karnabattus have no regular caste titles, but sometimes the elders add Ayya or Anna as a suffix to their name.

Karna Sālē.—The Karna Sālēs are a caste of Telugu weavers, who are called Sēniyans in the Tamil country, *e.g.*, at Madura and Tanjore. They seem to have no tradition as to their origin, but the name Karna would seem to have its origin in the legend relating to the Karnabattus. These are, in the community, both Saivites and Vaishnavites, and all members of the Illabaththini sept are Vaishnavites. They are said to have only one gōtra, Kāsi (Benares), and numerous exogamous septs, of which the following are examples:—

Vasthrāla, cloth.
Rudrākshala, seeds of *Elæocarpus Ganitrus*.
Mandha, village common or herd.
Kodavili, sickle.
Thādla, rope.
Thātichettu, palmyra palm.
Dhoddi, court-yard.
Thippa, rubbish-heap.

In some places, the office of headman, who is called Setti, is hereditary. He is assisted by a Pedda Kāpu, and Nela Setti, of whom the latter is selected monthly, and derives his name from the Telugu nela (month). In their marriage ceremonial, the Karna Sālēs closely follow the Padma Sālēs, but they have no upanāyanam (sacred thread rite), or Kāsiyathrē (mock pilgrimage to Benares), have twelve pots brought for worship, and no pot-searching.

As among other Telugu castes, when a girl reaches puberty, twigs of *Strychnos Nux-vomica* are placed in the

special hut erected for the occasion. On the third or fifth day, the girl's relations come to her house under a cloth canopy (ulladam), carrying rice soaked in jaggery (crude sugar) water. This rice is called dhadibiyam (wet rice), and is placed in a heap, and, after the waving of coloured water, distributed, with pān-supāri (betel leaves and areca nuts), among those present.

The dead are carried to the burial-ground in a car, and buried, after the manner of Lingāyats, in a sitting posture. Jangams officiate at funerals.

The caste deity is Somēsvara. Some Karna Sālēs wear the lingam, but are not particular about keeping it on their person, leaving it in the house, and wearing it when at meals, and on important occasions. Concerning the Lingāyat section of the community, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes, as follows.* "The Lingāyats resemble the Linga Balijas in all their customs, in all respects, except that they recognise sūtakam, or pollution, and bathe to remove it. They freely eat in the houses of all Linga Balijas, but the latter will not eat with them. They entirely disregard the spiritual authority of the Brāhmans, recognising priests among the Linga Balijas, Jangams, or Pandārams. In the exercise of their trade, they are distinguished from the Kaikōlans in that they sometimes weave in silk, which the Kaikōlans never do." Like the Padma Sālēs, the Karna Sālēs usually only weave coarse cotton cloths.

Karnam.—*See* Korono.

Karnam (accountant).—An exogamous sept of Kamma.

Karnataka.—The territorial name of a sub-division of Handichikka and Uppāra. It is also the name of a

* Manual of the North Arcot district.

sub-division of Mādhva and Smarta Brāhmans who speak the Kanarese language, as opposed to the Dēsastha Brāhmans, who are immigrants into Southern India from the Marātha country.

Kāro Panikkar.—A class of temple servants in Malabar. "The Kāro Panikkar is said to be descended from the union of Vēttakorumagan (the God of hunting) and a Kiriyattil Nāyar woman. His occupation is to act as Vellichapād or oracle in temples dedicated to his divine ancestor." *

Karpūra Chetti.—A synonym of Uppiliyans, who used to manufacture camphor (karpūra).

Kartā.—Kartā and Kartāvu, meaning agent or doer, is an honorific title of Nāyars and Sāmantas. It is also the name for the chief mourner at funerals of Nāyars and other castes on the west coast. Kartākkal, denoting, it is said, governors, has been returned, at times of census by Balijas claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura and Tanjore.

Karukku-pattayar (those of the sharp sword).—A sub-division of Shānān. In the Census Report, 1891, the division Karukku-mattai (petiole of the palmyra leaf with serrated edges) was returned. Some Shānāns are said to have assumed the name of Karukku-mattai Vellālas.

Karumala (black mountain).—An exogamous sept of Kānikar.

Karuman.—A sub-division of Kammālans, who do blacksmith's work.

Karumpuraththal.—A synonym for the caste name adopted by some Kāppiliyans.

---

* Gazetteer of the Malabar district.

Karumpurattan.—It is recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that "the term Karumpurattān is said to be a corruption of Karu-aruttar, which means the Annihilators, and to have been given to the caste because they are the descendants of a garrison of Chōla Vellālas, who treacherously allowed an enemy to enter the Tanjore fort, and annihilate the Rāja and his family. Winslow, however, says * that Karumpuram is a palmyra tree,† and Karumpurattān may thus mean a palmyra man, that is, a toddy-drawer. In the enumeration schedules, the name was often written Karumpuran. If this etymology is correct, this caste must originally have been Shānāns or Iluvans. It is said to have come from the village of Tiruvadamarudūr in Tanjore, and settled in the north-eastern part of Madura. The caste has seven sub-castes, called after seven nādus or villages in Madura, in which it originally settled. In its ceremonies, etc., it closely follows the Ilamagams. Its title is Pillai."

Karutta (dark-coloured).—Recorded, at the Madras census, 1891, as a sub-division of Idaiyans, who have also returned Karuttakkādu, meaning black cotton soil or regur.

Karuva Haddi.—A name for the scavenging section of Haddis.

Karuvan.—A corrupt form of Karumān.

Karuvēlam.—Recorded in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a sub-division of Nāyar.

Kasayi (butcher).—A Muhammadan occupational name.

Kāsi (Benares).—A gōtra of Mēdara and Karna Sālē.

---

* Tamil and English Dictionary, 1862.

† The word, in this sense, is said to occur in a Tamil work named Pingala Nikandu. Karuku is Tamil for the serrated margin of the leaf—petiole of the palmyra palm.

Kāsi.—A name for the stone-mason section of Kamsalas.

Kasturi (musk).—An exogamous sept of Badaga, Kamma, Okkiliyan, and Vakkaliga. Indian musk is obtained from the musk glands of the Himalayan musk-deer, *Moschus moschiferus.*

Kasuba (workmen).—A section of Irulas of the Nīlgiris, who have abandoned jungle life in favour of working on planters' estates or elsewhere.

Kāsukkar.—The name, derived from kās, cash, of a sub-division of Chetti.

Kāsula (copper coins).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē.

Kasyapa.—A Brāhmanical gōtra adopted by Bhatrāzus, Khatris, and Tontis. Kasyapa was one of the seven important Rishis, and the priest of Parasu Rāma.

Katakam (crab).—An exogamous sept of Kōmati.

Katal Arayan.—*See* Vālan.

Katāri (dagger: katār).—An exogamous sept of Golla, Mutrācha, and Yerukala. The dagger or poignard, called katār, has "a solid blade of diamond section, the handle of which consists of two parallel bars with a cross-piece joining them. The hand grips the cross-piece, and the bars pass along each side of the wrist."*

Katasan.—Recorded † as "a small caste of basket-makers and lime-burners in the Tinnevelly district. It has at least two endogamous sub-divisions, namely, Pattankatti and Nīttarasan. Widows are allowed to remarry. The dead are buried. The social position of the caste is above that of the Vēttuvans, and they consider themselves polluted if they eat food prepared by a Shānān. But they are not allowed to enter Hindu temples,

* Yule and Burnell. Hobson-Jobson.

† Madras Census Report, 1901.

they worship devils, and they have separate washermen and barbers of their own, all of which are signs of inferiority. Their title is Pattamkatti, and Kottan is also used."

Kāththavarāya.—A synonym for Vannān, derived from Kāththavarāya, the deified son of Kāli, from whom the Vannāns trace their descent.

Kaththē (donkey).—An exogamous sept of Mādiga.

Kaththi (knife).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga and Mādiga.

Kaththiri (scissors).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga, and sub-division of Gadaba.

Kaththiravāndlu (scissors people).—Concerning this section of the criminal classes, Mr. F. S. Mullaly writes to me as follows. "This is purely a Nellore name for this class of professional pick-pockets. The appellation seems to have been given to them from the fact that they frequent fairs and festivals, and busy railway platforms, offering knives and scissors for sale. And, when an opportunity presents itself, they are used for cutting strings of beads, ripping open bags, etc. Several of these light-fingered gentry have been found with small scissors in their mouths. Most of them wear shoes of a peculiar shape, and these form a convenient receptacle for the scissors. Bits of broken glass (to act as knives) are frequently found in their mouths. In different districts they are known by different appellations, such as Donga Dāsaris in North Arcot and parts of Cuddapah; Golla Woddars, Donga Woddars, and Muheri Kalas in Cuddapah, Bellary, and Kurnool; Pachupus in Kistna and Godāvari; Alagiris, Ena or Thogamalai Koravas in the southern districts. Individuals belonging to this class of thieves have been traced, since the opening of the East Coast Railway, as far as

Midnapore. An important way of identifying them is the fact that everyone of them, male and female, is branded at the corners of the eyebrows and between the eyes in childhood, as a safeguard against convulsions."

For the following additional information I am indebted to an official of the Police department. "I am not aware of these people using any particular shoes. They use sandals such as are generally worn by ryots and the lower classes. These they get by stealing. They pick them up from houses during the daytime, when they go from house to house on the pretence of begging, or they steal them at nights along with other property. These sandals are made in different fashions in different districts, and so those possessed by Kathiras are generally of different kinds, being stolen from various parts of the country. They have no shoes of any peculiar make, nor do they get any made at all. Kathiras do not generally wear any shoes. They walk and run faster with bare feet. They wear shoes when walking through the jungle, and entrust them to one of their comrades when walking through the open country. They sometimes throw them off when closely pursued, and run away. In 1899, when we arrested one on the highroad, he had with him five or six pairs of shoes of different kinds and sizes, and he did not account satisfactorily for being in possession of so many. I subsequently learnt that some supernumeraries were hiding in the jungle close to the place where he was arrested.

"About marks of branding on the face, it is not only Kathiras, but almost all nomadic tribes who have these marks. As the gangs move on exposed to changes of weather, the children sometimes get a disease called sandukatlu or palakurkura. They generally get this disease from the latter part of the first year up to the

fifth year. The symptoms are similar to those which children sometimes have at the time of teething. It is when children get this disease that they are branded on the face between the eyebrows, on the outer corners of the eyes, and sometimes on the belly. The brand-marks on the face and corners of the eyes are circular, and those on the belly generally horizontal. The circular brand-marks are made with a long piece of turmeric, one end of which is burnt for the purpose, or with an indigo-coloured cloth rolled like a pencil and burnt at one end. The horizontal marks are made with a hot needle. Similar brand-marks are made by some caste Hindus on their children."

To Mr. P. B. Thomas I am indebted for specimens of the chaplet, made of strips of rolled pith, worn by Kaththira women when begging, and of the cotton bags, full of false pockets, regularly carried by both men and women, in which they secrete the little sharp knife and other articles constituting their usual equipment.

In his "History of Railway thieves," Mr. M. Paupa Rao Naidu, writing about the pick-pockets or Thetakars, says that "most of them wear shoes called chadāvs, and, if the articles stolen are very small, they put them at once into their shoes, which form very convenient receptacles from their peculiar shape; and, therefore, when a pick-pocket with such a shoe on is suspected of having stolen a jewel, the shoes must be searched first, then the mouth and the other parts of the body."

Kaththula (sword).—An exogamous sept of Yānadi.

Kātige (collyrium).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kātikala (collyrium).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga.

Katike.—The Katike or Katikilu are butchers in the Telugu country, concerning whom it is noted, in the

Kurnool Manual, that "some are called Sultāni butchers, or Hindus forcibly circumcised by the late Nabob of Kurnool. They observe both Mussalman and Hindu customs." A correspondent in the Kurnool district informs me that the butchers of Kurnool belong to three classes, one selling beef, and the others mutton. Of these, the first are Muhammadans, and are called Gāyi Khasayi, as they deal in beef. The other two are called respectively Sultānis and Surasus, *i.e.*, the circumcised and uncircumcised. Both claim to be the descendants of two brothers, and have the following tradition concerning their origin. Tīpu Sultān is said not to have relished the idea of taking mutton at the hands of Hindus, as they would not perform Bismallah at the time of slaughtering the sheep. He accordingly ordered both the brothers to appear before him. Being the manager of the family, the elder went, and was forcibly circumcised. On hearing the news, the younger brother absconded. The descendants of the former are Muhammadans, and of the latter Hindus. As he was made a Muhammadan by force, the elder brother and his descendants did not adopt all the Muhammadan manners and customs. Till recently they did not even allow their beards to grow. At the present day, they go to mosques, dress like Muhammadans, shave their heads, and grow beards, but do not intermarry with the true Muhammadans. The descendants of the younger brother still call themselves Āri-katikelu, or Marātha butchers, profess the Hindu religion, and follow Hindu manners and customs. Though they do not eat with Muhammadans or Sultānis, their Hindu brethren shun them because of their profession, and their intimacy with Sultānis. I am informed that, at Nandyal in the Kurnool district, some Marātha butchers, who observe

purely Hindu customs, are called by Muhammadan names. The Tahsildar of the Sirvel tāluk in the same district states that, prior to the reign of the father of Ghulam Rasul Khān, the dethroned Nawāb of Kurnool, the butcher's profession was solely in the hands of the Marāthas, some of whom were, as stated in the Manual, forcibly circumcised, and became a separate butcher caste, called Sultāni. There are two sections among these Sultāni butchers, viz., Bakra (mutton) and Gai Kasai (beef butcher). Similar stories of forcible conversion to the Muhammadan religion are prevalent in the Bellary district, where the Kasāyis are mostly converted Hindus, who dress in the Hindu style, but possess Muhammadan names with Hindu terminations, *e.g.*, Hussainappa.

In connection with butchers, I may quote the following extract from a petition to the Governor of Madras on the subject of a strike among the Madras butchers in 1907. "We, the residents of Madras, beg respectfully to bring to your Excellency's notice the inconvenience and hardship we are suffering owing to the strike of the butchers in the city. The total failure of the supply of mutton, which is an important item in the diet of non-Brāhmin Hindus, Muhammadans, Indian Christians, Parsis, Eurasians and Europeans, causes a deprivation not merely of something to which people have become accustomed, but of an article of food by which the health of many is sustained, and the want of which is calculated to impair their health, and expose them to diseases, against which they have hitherto successfully contended."

Katorauto.—A name for the offspring of maid servants in the harems of Oriya Zamindars, who are said to claim to be Kshatriyas.

Katta.—Katta or Kattē, meaning a bund, dam, or embankment, has been recorded as an exogamous sept or gōtra of Dēvānga and Kurni.

Kattelu (sticks or faggots).—An exogamous sept of Bōya.

Kattira.—A sub-division of Gadaba.

Kāttu.—*See* Kādu.

Kattukudugirajāti.—The name, meaning the caste which allows living together after marriage of an informal kind, recorded * as the caste name of Turuvalars (Vēdars) of Salem, derived from a custom among them, which authorises temporary matrimonial arrangements.

Kāttu Kāpari (dweller in the forest).—Said to be a name for Irulas or Villiyans. The equivalent Kāttu Kāpu is, in like manner, said to be a name for Jōgis.

Kāttu Marāthi.—A synonym of Kuruvikāran.

Kaudikiāru.—Kaudikiāru or Gaudikiāru is a title of Kurubas.

Kāvadi.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, Kabadi is returned as the name of a class of Telugu wood-cutters. Kāvadi is the name of a division of Koravas, who carry offerings to Perumālswāmi at Tirupati on a pole (kāvadi). Kāvadi or Kāvadiga is further the name given to Kannadiyan curd-sellers in Madras, who carry the curds in pots as head-loads.

Kāvalgar (watchman).—Recorded, at times of census, as a sub-division of Ambalakāran, and title of Nattamān, Malaimān, and Sudarmān. The equivalent Kāvali is recorded as a sub-division of the Kammas. The Kāvalis, or watchers, in the Telugu country, are said to be generally Lingāyat Bōyas.† The Telugu Mutrāchas are also called Kāvalgar. The village kāval

* Manual of the Salem district.

† Madras Census Report, 1901.

system in the southern districts is discussed in the note on Maravans.

Kavandan.—At the census, 1901, more than nine thousand people returned themselves as Kavandan or Kaundan, which is a title of Konga Vellālas, and many other castes, such as Anappan, Kāppiliyan, Palli, Sembadavan, Urāli, and Vēttuvan. The name corresponds to the Canarese Gauda or Gaunda.

Kaundinya (a sage).—A Brāhmanical gōtra adopted by Rāzus and Bhatrāzus.

Kavanē (sling).—An exogamous sept of Gangadikāra Holeyas.

Kavarai.—Kavarai is the name for Balijas (Telugu trading caste), who have settled in the Tamil country. The name is said to be a corrupt form of Kauravar or Gauravar, descendants of Kuroo of the Mahābaratha, or to be the equivalent of Gauravalu, sons of Gauri, the wife of Siva. Other suggested derivatives are: (*a*) a corrupt form of the Sanskrit Kvaryku, badness or reproach, and Arya, *i.e.*, deteriorated Aryans; (*b*) Sanskrit Kavara, mixed, or Kavaraha, a braid of hair, *i.e.*, a mixed class, as many of the Telugu professional prostitutes belong to this caste; (*c*) Kavarai or Gavaras, buyers or dealers in cattle.

The Kavarais call themselves Balijas, and derive the name from bali, fire, jaha sprung, *i.e.*, men sprung from fire. Like other Telugu castes, they have exogamous septs, *e.g.*, tupāki (gun), jetti (wrestler), pagadāla (coral), bandi (cart), sīmaneli, etc.

The Kavarais of Srīvilliputtūr, in the Tinnevelly district, are believed to be the descendants of a few families, which emigrated thither from Manjakuppam (Cuddalore) along with one Dora Krishnamma Nāyudu. About the time of Tirumal Nāyak, one Rāmaswāmi

Rāju, who had five sons, of whom the youngest was Dora Krishnamma, was reigning near Manjakuppam. Dora Krishnamma, who was of wandering habits, having received some money from his mother, went to Trichinopoly, and, when he was seated in the main bazar, an elephant rushed into the street. The beast was stopped in its career, and tamed by Dora Krishnamma, to escort whom to his palace Vijayaranga Chokkappa sent his retinue and ministers. While they were engaged in conversation, news arrived that some chiefs in the Tinnevelly district refused to pay their taxes, and Dora Krishnamma volunteered to go and subdue them. Near Srīvilliputtūr he passed a ruined temple dedicated to Krishna, which he thought of rebuilding if he should succeed in subduing the chiefs. When he reached Tinnevelly, they, without raising any objection, paid their dues, and Dora Krishnamma returned to Srīvilliputtūr, and settled there.

Their marriage ceremonies are based on the type common to many Telugu castes, but those who belong to the Sīmaneli sept, and believe themselves to be direct descendants of Krishnamma, have two special forms of ceremonial, viz., Krishnamma pērantālu, and the carrying of pots (gurigelu) on the heads of the bride and bridegroom when they go to the temple before the Kāsiyatra ceremony. The Krishnamma pērantālu is performed on the day prior to the muhūrtam (tāli-tying), and consists in the worship of the soul of Krishnamma, a married woman. A new cloth is purchased and presented to a married woman, together with money, betel, etc., and she is fed before the rest. It is practically a form of srādh ceremony, and all the formalities of the srādh, except the hōmam (sacred fire) and repeating of mantras from the Vēdas, are gone through. This is very commonly

observed by Brāhmans, and a few castes which engage a Brāhman priest for their ceremonies. The main idea is the propitiation of the soul of the dead married woman. If such a woman dies in a family, every ceremony of an auspicious nature must be preceded by sumangali-prarthana, or worship of this married woman (sumangali). Orthodox females think that, if the ceremony is not performed, she will do them some harm. Another custom, now dying out, is the tying of a dagger to the waist of the bridegroom.

In the Madura district, the Kavarais are described * as being "most commonly manufacturers and sellers of bangles made of a particular kind of earth, found only in one or two parts of the district. Those engaged in this traffic usually call themselves Chettis or merchants. When otherwise employed as spinners, dyers, painters, and the like, they take the title of Nāyakkan. It is customary with these, as with other Nāyakkans, to wear the sacred thread: but the descendants of the Nāyakkan kings, who are now living at Vellei-kuricchi, do not conform to this usage, on the ground that they are at present in a state of impurity and degradation, and consequently ought not to wear the sacred emblem."

The bulk of the Kavarais in Tanjore are said † "to bear the title Nāyak. Some that are engaged in trade, more especially those who sell glass bangles, are called Settis, and those who originally settled in agriculture are called Reddis. The title of Nāyak, like Pillai, Mudali, and Setti, is generally sought after. As a rule, men of the Palli or cooly class, when they enter the Government service, and shepherds, when they grow

* Manual of the Madura district.

† Manual of the Tanjore district.

rich in trade or otherwise, assume this title, wear the nāmam (the trident mark on the forehead emblematic of the Vaishnava persuasion), and call themselves Kavarais or Vadugars, though they cannot speak Telugu, much less point to any part of the Telugu country as the seat of their forefathers."

One of the largest sub-divisions of the Kavarais is Valaiyal, the Tamil equivalent of Gazula, both words meaning a glass or lac bangle.*

Kāvuthiyan.—The Kāvuthiyans are described as follows in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "They are barbers who serve the Tiyans and lower castes; they are also sometimes given the title Kurup. Their females act as midwives. There seem to be several sections, distinguished by the affix of the name of the castes which they serve, as for instance Tacchakāvuthiyan or Tacchakurup, and Kanisakāvuthiyan, appropriated to the service of the Asāris and Kanisans respectively; while the barbers who serve the Izhuvans are known both as Aduttōns, Vattis, or Izhuva Kāvuthiyans. But whether all these should be regarded as offshoots of one main barber caste, or as degraded sections of the castes which they serve, the Kāvuthiyans proper being only barbers to the Tiyans, it is difficult to determine. The fact that the Nāviyan or Kāvuthiyan section of the Veluttedans, as well as the Kāvuthiyan section of the Mukkuvans, are admittedly but degraded sections of these castes, makes the second the more probable view. It is also to be noticed that the Kāvuthiyans, in the north at least, follow marumakkattāyam (inheritance in the female line), while the Taccha and Kanisa Kāvuthiyans follow the other principle of descent."

---

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

Kayalān.—The Kayalāns are Tamil-speaking Muhammadans, closely allied to the Marakkāyars and living at Kāyalpatnam in Tinnevelly. Many of them have settled as merchants in Madras, and sell glass beads, cowry shells, dolls from Tirupati, toys, etc. Some are money-lenders to the lower classes, and others travel about from village to village selling, for cash or credit rates, cloths, brass vessels, and other articles. They are sometimes called Ārumāsaththukadankārar, or six months' debt people, as this is the time usually allowed for payment. At Kāyalpatnam, a Kayalān husband is expected to live in his father-in-law's house, and, in connection with this custom, the following legend is narrated. The chiefman of the town gave his daughter in marriage to a man living in an adjacent village. One evening, she went to fetch water from a tank, and, on her way back, trod on a cobra. She could not move her foot, lest she should be bitten, so she stood where she was, with her water-pot on her head, till she was discovered by her father on the following morning. He killed the snake with the kitti (tweezers) and knife which he had with him, and told the girl to go with him to his house. She, however, refused to do so, and went to her husband's house, from which she was subsequently taken to that of her father. The kitti is an instrument of torture, consisting of two sticks tied together at one end, between which the fingers were placed as in a lemon squeezer. With this instrument, the fingers were gradually bent backwards towards the back of the hand, until the sufferer, no longer able to endure the excruciating pain, yielded to the demands made on him to make confession of guilt.

Kāyasth.—Kāyasth or Kāyastha is the writer-caste of Bengal. *See* Risley, Tribes and Castes of Bengal.

Kayerthannāya (*Strychnos Nux-vomica* sept).—An exogamous sept of the Bants and Shivalli Brāhmans in South Canara.

Kayila (unripe fruit).—An exogamous sept of Orugunta Kāpu.

Keimal (kei, hand, as an emblem of power).—A sub-division of Nāyar.

Kēla.—A small class of Oriya jugglers and mountebanks, whose women, like the Dommara females, are often prostitutes. The name is derived from kēli, dancing, or khēl to play.

Kelasi.—For the following account of the Kelasi or barber caste of South Canara, I am indebted to a note on the barbers of Tuluva by Mr. M. Bapu Rao.* The caste name is derived from kelasa, work. In like manner, the Canarese barbers of Bellary and Dharwar call themselves Kashta Mādōvaru, or those who perform the difficult task.

The barbers of South Canara are of different castes or sub-castes according to the language they speak, or the people for whom they operate. Thus there are (1) the Tulu Kelsi (Kutchidāye, man of the hair) or Bhandāri; (2) the Konkani Kelsi or Mhāllo, who must have migrated from the north; (3) the Hindustani Kelsi or Hajāms; (4) the Lingāyat Kelsi or Hadapavada (man of the wallet); (5) the Māppilla (Moplah) barber Vasa; (6) the Malayāli barber Kāvudiyan; and even Telugu and Tamil barbers imported by the sepoy regiments until recently stationed at Mangalore. Naturally the Tulus form the bulk of the class in Tuluva. There is among them a section known as Maddele, employed by palm-tappers, and hence considered socially inferior to

* Madras Christ. Coll. Mag., 1894.

the Bhandāri, who is employed by the higher classes. [The Billava barbers are called Parēl Madiali or Parēl Madivala.] If a high caste barber operates for a man of lower caste, he loses his caste thereby, and has to pay a fine, or in some other way expiate his offence before he gains re-admission into his community. Pariahs in these parts have no separate caste of barbers, but any-one among themselves may try his skill on any head. Māppilla barbers are employed only by the Muham-madans. Even in their own community, however, they do not live in commensality with other Māppillas though gradations of caste are not recognised by their religion.

The barber is not ambitious enough to claim equality of rank with the Bant, the potter, the piper, the weaver, or the oilmonger; but he shows a decided disposition to regard himself as above the level of the fisherman or the palanquin-bearer. The latter often disclaim any such inferiority, and refer to the circumstance that they dis-charge the functions of carrying the huge umbrella in marriage processions, and shouldering the gods in religious processions. They argue that their rivals perform an operation, the defilement of which can only be wiped off by bathing the head with a solution of sacred earth taken from besides the roots of the tulsi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*). In justice to the barber, how-ever, it must be mentioned that he has to perform certain priestly duties for most Sūdras. His presence is essential at two of the ceremonies observed by castes professing to be superior to his. At the name-giving ceremony a Tulu barber has to tie a thread round the waist of the child, and name it, among Sūdras of a higher caste than himself. [At the present day, the Bhandāri is said to receive his fee for tying the thread, though he does not actually perform the act.] Again, on the death of a

high caste Sūdra, the barber has to carry the fire to the cremation ground, though the funeral pyre is lighted by the relations of the deceased. He also has to assist at certain other rites connected with funeral obsequies, such as purifying the house.

[The collection of fragments of bones from the ashes, heaping up the ashes, and cleaning the spot where the corpse was burnt, are the business of the Kelasi. These duties he performs for Morlis, Bants, Gattis, and Vodaris. The Bhandāri or Kelasi is an object of intense hatred to Konkani women, who call them by abusive names, such as fellow with a burnt face, miserable wretch, widow-maker, etc.]

The barber in South Canara has invented several stories concerning the origin of his first progenitor. At a time when the barber had not yet been created, Siva was a bachelor, spending his time in austere devotions, and allowing his hair to grow into long matted locks. A time came when he became bent on matrimony, and he thought that the hirsute condition of his face would not be appreciated by his bride, the young daughter of the king of the mountains. It was at this juncture that the barber was created to make Siva a good-looking bridegroom, and the Brāhman to officiate at the marriage ceremony. According to another legend, a Gāndharva-born woman was on one occasion cast into the sea by irate Brahma, and doomed to be turned into a rock. Moved by her piteous entreaties, however, Brahma relented, and ordained that she should be restored to human form when Parasurāma should happen to set his foot upon the rock. This came to pass when Parasurāma thrust back the waters of the western sea in order to create the western coast. The re-humanised woman thereupon offered her thanksgivings in such

winning words that the great Brāhman hero asked her to beg any boon she wished. She begged a son, who should in some way remind generations to come of the great Brāhman who had reclaimed her from her inanimate state. The boon was thereupon granted that she should give birth to sons, who would not indeed be Brāhmans, but who would perform functions analogous to those performed by Brāhmans. The barber thus discharges certain priestly duties for Sūdras, and cleanses the body even as the Brāhman cleanses the soul; and the defilement caused by the razor can be removed only by the smearing of mud and water, because the barber's female progenitor was a rock recovered out of water.

The primary occupation of the barber does not always bring in a sufficient income, while it leaves him a large amount of leisure. This he spends, if possible, in agricultural labour, in which he is materially assisted by his female relations. Barbers residing in towns hold no land to fall back upon, but their average monthly earnings range from five to seven rupees. Their brethren in the villages are not so busy plying the razor, so they cultivate land as tenants. One of the blessings conferred by Parasurāma is that the barber shall never starve.

When a child is born, a male member of the family has to tie a thread round its waist, and give it a name. The choice of a name often depends upon the day of the week on which the child was born. If it is born on a Sunday it is called, if a boy, Aitha (Auditya, sun), or, if a girl, Aithe; if on a Monday, Sōmē or Sōmu; if on a Tuesday, Angāra or Angāre; if on a Wednesday, Budāra or Budāre, changed among Pariahs into Mudāra or Mudāru; if on a Thursday, Guruva or Guruvu; if on

a Friday, Tukra (Shukra) or Tukru ; if on a Saturday, Taniya (Saniya) or Taniyaru. Other names which are common are Lakkana (Lakshmana), Krishna, Subba, and Korapulu (Koraga woman). Those who can afford to do so often employ a Brāhman priest to ascertain whether the child is born lucky or unlucky ; and, in the latter case, the barber is advised to offer something to the tutelary deity or the nine planets, or to propitiate the village deity, if it is found that the child is born under its evil eye. No lullaby should be sung while the child is being rocked for the first time in a cradle, perhaps because, if the very first rocking is done with a show of rejoicing, some evil spirit may be envious of the human joy, and mar the happiness.

The initiation of a boy into the mysteries of his hereditary profession takes place between the tenth and the fourteenth year. In very rare cases, nowadays, a boy is sent to school between the sixth and eighth year. These occasions are marked by offerings of cocoanuts and plantains to the village deity.

With boys marriage takes place between the sixteenth and twenty-fifth year, with girls before or after puberty. Matches are made by selection on the part of the parents. Lads are sometimes allowed to choose their own brides, but their choice is subject to the approval of the parents, as it must necessarily be in a joint family. Bridegrooms have to pay for their brides a dowry varying from twenty to fifty rupees, and sometimes as much as a hundred rupees. Deformed girls, however, fetch no price ; on the other hand, they have to pay some pecuniary inducement to the bridegroom. Widows are allowed, and, when young, encouraged to remarry. The most essential condition of a valid marriage is that the contracting parties should belong to different baris or balis (exogamous

septs). As examples of the names of these balis, the following may be cited: Bangāru (gold), Sālia (weaver), Uppa (salt), Kombara (cap made of areca palm leaf), Karimbara (sugar-cane). Horoscopes are not consulted for the suitability or future prosperity of a match, but the day and hour, or lagnam of a marriage are always fixed by a Brāhman priest with reference to the conjunction of stars. The marriage lasts for three days, and takes place in the house of the bridegroom. This is in accordance with the primitive conception of marriage as a bringing away by force or procuring a bride from her parents, rather than with the current Brāhman idea that the bridegroom should be invited, and the girl given away as a present, and committed to his custody and protection. The marriage ceremony takes place in a pandal (booth) on a raised or conspicuous place adorned with various figures or mandala. The pair are made to sit on a bench, and rice is sprinkled on their heads. A barber then shaves the chin and forehead of the bridegroom, the hair border being in the form of a broken pointed arch converging upwards. He also touches the bride's cheeks with the razor, with the object of removing what is called monetha kale, the stain on the face. The full import of this ceremony is not clear, but the barbers look upon the act as purificatory. If a girl has not come of age at the time of marriage, it is done on the occasion of the nuptials. If she has, the barber, in addition to touching the cheeks with the razor, goes to her house, sprinkles some water over her with a betel leaf, and makes her touch the pot in which rice is to be cooked in her husband's house. At the bridegroom's house, before the assembled guests, elders, and headman of the caste, the man and the girl are linked together in the marriage bond by having water (dhāre) poured on their joined hands. Next, the right

hands of the pair being joined (kaipattāvane), the bridegroom leads the bride to her future home.

Soon after a death occurs, a barber is summoned, who sprinkles water on the corpse, and touches it with a razor if it be of a male. In every ceremony performed by him, the barber must have recourse to his razor, even as the Brāhman priest cannot do without his kūsa grass. The rich burn their dead, and the poor bury them. Persons dying of infectious diseases are always buried. Prior to the removal of the corpse to the cremation or burial ground, all the clothes on and about it, with the exception of one cloth to cover it from head to foot, are removed and distributed to Pariahs, who have prepared the pyre or dug the grave. Before the mourners return from the cemetery, they light four lamps in halves of cocoanuts, and leave them burning on the spot. Coming home, the chief mourner places in the hands of the Gurukāra or headman of the caste a jewel or other valuable article as a security that he will duly perform all the funeral rites. This is termed sāvuotti dipunā. The Gurukāra, in the presence of the relations and friends assembled, returns the same, enjoining its recipient to be prepared to perform the requisite rites, even with the proceeds of the sale of the pledged article if necessary. The eleventh day is the sāvu or principal mourning day, on which the headman and elders of the caste, as well as the friends and relations of the deceased ought to be present. On the spot where the deceased expired, or as near thereto as possible, an ornamental square scaffolding is erected, and covered with cloth coloured with turmeric. The ground below the scaffolding is covered with various figures, and flowers and green leaves are strewn on it. Each mourner throws on this spot handfuls of cooked rice, coloured yellow and red, and cries out "Oh! uncle,

I cry murrio," or "Oh! father, I cry murrio," and so on, according to the relationship in which the deceased stood to the mourner. This ceremony is called murrio korpuna, or crying alas. In well-to-do families it is usual to accompany this with devil-dancing. On the twelfth day, rice is offered to crows, the original belief apparently being that the spirits of the deceased enter into birds or beasts, so that food given to these may happen to reach and propitiate them. On the night of the thirteenth day, the relations of the deceased set apart a plantain leaf for the spirit of the departed, serve cooked rice on it, and, joining their hands, pray that the soul may be gathered unto its ancestors, and rest in peace. The anniversary of the death, called agel, is celebrated by placing cooked rice on two plantain leaves placed over sacrificial twigs, and burning incense and waving lamps before it. This is called soma dipunā.

The family god of the barber is Krishna of Udipi, and the high-priest to whom he pays homage is the Saniyāsi (religious ascetic), who for the time being worships that god. The same high-priest is also the final court of appeal from the decisions of the village council of the barbers in matters relating to caste and religion. The powers which are ever present to the barber's mind, and which he always dreads and tries to propitiate, are the village demons, and the departed spirits of members of his own family. If a child falls ill, he hastens to the Brāhman seer, to learn who is offended, and how the spirit should be appeased. If his cow does not eat hay, he anxiously enquires to which demon he should carry a cock. If the rain fails or the crops are poor, he hies to the nearest deity with cocoanuts, plantains, and the tender spikes of areca. In case of serious illness, he undertakes a vow to beg from door to door on certain

days, and convey the money thus accumulated to Tirupati. In his house, he keeps a small closed box with a slit in the lid, through which he drops a coin at every pinch of misfortune, and the contents are eventually sent to that holy place.

The affairs of the community are regulated by a council of elders. In every village, or for every group of houses, there is an hereditary Gurukāra or headman of the barbers, who is assisted by four Moktesars. If any of these five authorities receives a complaint, he gives notice to the others, and a meeting is arranged to take place in some house. When there is a difference of opinion, the opinion of the majority decides the issue. When a decision cannot be arrived at, the question is referred to the council of another village. If this does not settle the point at issue, the final appeal lies to the Swāmi of the the Udipi temple. The council inquires into alleged offences against caste, and punishes them. It declares what marriages are valid, and what not. It not only preserves discipline within the community itself, but takes notice of external affairs affecting the well-being of the community. Thus, if the pipers refuse to make music at their marriage processions, the council resolves that no barber shall shave a piper. Disputes concerning civil rights were once submitted to these councils, but, as their decisions are not now binding, aggrieved parties seek justice from courts of law.

Punishments consist of compensation for minor offences affecting individuals, and of fine or excommunication if the offence affects the whole community. If the accused does not attend the trial, he may be excommunicated for contempt of authority. If the person seeks re-admission into the caste, he has to pay a fine, which goes to the treasury of the temple at Udipi. The

presiding Swāmi at the shrine accepts the fine, and issues a writ authorising the re-admission of the penitent offender. The headman collects the fine to be forwarded to the Swāmi, and, if he is guilty of any malpractice, the whole community, generally called the ten, may take cognisance of the offence. Offences against marriage relations, shaving low caste people, and such like, are all visited with fine, which is remitted to the Swāmi, from whom purification is obtained. The power of the village councils, however, has greatly declined in recent years, as the class of cases in which their decision can be enforced is practically very small.

The Tulu barbers, like many other castes on the western coast, follow the aliya santāna system of inheritance (in the female line). The tradition in South Canara is that this, and a number of other customs, were imposed upon certain castes by Bhūtāla Pāndya. The story relates that Dēva Pāndya, a merchant of the Pāndya kingdom, once had some new ships built, but before they put to sea, the demon Kundodara demanded a human sacrifice. The merchant asked his wife to spare one of her seven sons for the purpose, but she refused to be a party to the sacrifice, and went away with her sons to her father's house. The merchant's sister thereupon offered her son. Kundodara, however, was so very pleased with the appearance of this son that he spared his life, and made him a king, whose sway extended over Tuluva. This king was called Bhūtāla Pāndya, and he, being directed by Kundodara, imposed upon the people the system of nephew inheritance.

The barber is changing with the times. He now seldom uses the old unfoldable wooden-handled razor forged by the village blacksmith, but has gone in for what he calls Rāja sri (royal fortune ; corruption of

Rodgers) razors. He believes that he is polluted by the operation which it is his lot to perform, and, on his return home from his morning round, he must bathe and put on washed clothes.

Ken.—Ken (red) and Kenja (red ant) have both been recorded as gōtras of Kurni.

Kenna.—A division of Toda.

Kēpumāri.—It is noted, in the Gazetteer of South Arcot, that "the Kēpumāris are one of the several foreign communities from other districts, who help to swell the total of the criminal classes in South Arcot. Their head-quarters is at Tiruvallūr in the Chingleput district, but there is a settlement of them at Māriyānkuppam (not far from Porto Novo), and another large detachment at Kunisampet in French territory. They commit much the same class of crime as the Donga Dāsaris, frequenting railway trains and crowded gatherings, and they avert suspicion by their respectable appearance and pleasant manners. Their house-language is Telugu. They call themselves Alagiri Kēpumāris. The etymology of the second of these two words is not free from doubt, but the first of them is said to be derived from Alagar, the god of the Kallans, whose temple at the foot of the hills about twelve miles north of Madura town is a well-known place of pilgrimage, and to whom these people, and other criminal fraternities annually offer a share of their ill-gotten gains." Information concerning the criminal methods of these people, under the name Capemari, will be found in Mr. F. S. Mullaly's 'Notes on Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency.'

Kērala.—Defined by Mr. Wigram* as "the western coast from Gokarnam to Cape Comorin, comprising

* Malabar Law and Custom.

Travancore, Cochin, Malabar, and part of South Canara."

Kērē (tank).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kēsari (lion).—A gōtra of Kurni.

Kēthaki (*Pandanus fascicularis*).—An exogamous sept of Stānika.

Kethri.—*See* Khatri.

Kēvuto.—It is recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, that "the Kēvutas are the fisherman caste of Ganjam, and they are said to be the descendants of the Kaibartas, a fishing caste of Bengal. Besides fishing in rivers, canals and lakes, they ply boats and catamarans, and some are also traders. Uriya Brāhmans and Bairāgis are their priests. From the fifth day after child-birth till the twenty-first, the Uriya Brāhmans read the Bhāgavata Purāna in the house, and on the last day they give a name to the child. The married girls and widows put a veil over their faces whenever they go out of doors."

The Kēvutos are low in the social scale, but not a polluting caste. They apparently recognise the following endogamous sub-divisions:—Bhettiya, Bilva, Jonka, Khottia, Koibarto or Dasa, Liyāri, Chuditiya, and Thossa. Of these the Thossas are cultivators, the Liyāris make a preparation of fried rice (liya), and the Chudityas are engaged in parching grain (chuda, parched rice). By reason of their change of occupation, the Liyāris and Chudityas have practically become distinct castes, and some deny that there is any connection between them and the Kēvutos. Telugu people sometimes call the Chuditiyas Neyyalu, and I am told that there is a street in Parlakimedi almost wholly inhabited by Kēvutos, who say that they are of the Neyyalu caste.

Of gōtras which occur among the Kēvutos, nāgo (cobra), bhāgo (tiger), and kochipo (tortoise) are the most common. They also have exogamous septs or bamsams, among which are gogudiya (bells) and nolini (bamboo carrier). The titles which occur in the caste are Bēhara, Sitto, Torei, Jalli, Bejjo, and Paiko.

The marriage rite is performed at night, and the bride's father ties a gold bead (konti) on the neck of the bridegroom. The Kēvutos worship especially Dasarāj and Gangadēvi. The latter is worshipped at the Dasara festival, and, in some places, fowls and goats are sacrificed in her honour. In the neighbourhood of the Chilka lake, the goats are not sacrificed, but set at liberty, and allowed to graze on the Kālikadēvi hill. There is a belief that animals thus devoted to Gangadēvi do not putrify when they die, but dry up.

In the Vizagapatam Agency tracts, the Kēvutos are said to be notorious for their proficiency in magic and necromancy.

Khadi.—A sub-division of Telli.

Khadiya.—A name, said to be derived from ghatiyal, meaning a person possessed, and used as a term of reproach for Kudumis of Travancore.

Khajjaya (cake).—An exogamous sept of Vakkaliga.

Kharvi.—The Kharvis are described, in the South Canara Manual, as "Marāthi fishermen, who migrated to this district from the Bombay Presidency. The name Kharvi is said to be a corrupt form of the Sanskrit kshār, salt. They are hardworking but thriftless, and much given to drink, chiefly toddy. They are sea-fishermen and good sailors, and also work as domestic servants and labourers. They employ Havīk Brāhmans to perform their marriage and other ceremonies. The head of the Sringēri Math is their spiritual teacher."

The Kharvis are Konkani-speaking fishermen and cultivators, found in the Kundapūr tāluk of South Canara. Those who are not engaged in fishing always wear the sacred thread, whereas the fishermen wear it for seven days from the Srāvana Hunnami, or full-moon day of the month Srāvana (August-September), and then remove it. All are Saivites, and disciples of the Sringēri mutt. Ajai Masti and Nagu Masti are the deities specially worshipped by them. They follow the makkala santāna law of inheritance (from father to son). Their headmen are called Sāranga or Patēl, and these names are used as titles by members of the families of the headmen. The assistant to the headman is styled Naik or Naicker.

For the performance of the marriage ceremonial, Shivalli or Kota Brāhmans are engaged. The dhāre form of marriage (*see* Bant) is observed, but there are a few points of detail, which may be noted. Five women decorate the bride inside her house just before she comes to the marriage pandal (booth), and tie on her neck a gold bead (dhāre mani) and black beads. At the pandal she stands in front of the bridegroom, separated from him by a screen, which is stretched between them. Garlands of tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*) are exchanged, and the screen is removed. Bāshingams (chaplets) are tied on the foreheads of the bridal pair at the outset of the ceremonial, and are worn for five days.

The dead are cremated, and, in most cases, the ashes are thrown into a river. But, among the orthodox, they are taken to Gokarna, and thrown into the river at that place. On the eleventh day, presents are made to Brāhmans after purification. On the following day, food is offered on two leaves to the soul of the deceased.

One of the leaves is thrown into water, and the other given to a cow or bull.

Khāsa.—It is noted by the Rev. J. Cain * that "members of this caste are found chiefly in attendance on zamindars and other rich people, and report says that they are not unfrequently their illegitimate children." Khāsa is synonymous with Ādapāpa (*q.v.*).

Khāsgi.—Marāthas, of whom a few families constitute the aristocracy in the Sandūr State.

Khatri.—The Khatris are described by Mr. Lewis Rice † as "silk weavers, who in manners, customs, and language are akin to Patvēgars, but they do not intermarry with them, although the two castes eat together. The Katris claim to be Kshatriyas, and quote Rēnuka Purāna as their authority. The legend is that, during the general massacre of the Kshatriyas by Parasu Rāma, five women, each of whom was big with child, escaped, and took refuge in a temple dedicated to Kāli. When the children came of age, their marriages were celebrated, and their mothers prayed to Kāli to point out some means of livelihood. In answer to their supplications, the goddess gave them looms, and taught them weaving and dyeing. The Katris claim descent from these refugees, and follow the same trades."

The following note relates to the Khatris of Conjeeveram, where most of them trade in silk thread, silk sashes, and dye-stuffs. Some deal in human hair, which is used by native females as a chignon. By reason of their connection with the silk industry, the Khatris are called Patnūlkāran by other castes. The true Patnūlkārans are called Kōshta by the Khatris. The Khatris give Bhuja Rāja Kshatriya as their caste name, and

* Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879. † Mysore and Coorg Gazetteer.

some say that they are the descendants of one Karta Virya Arjuna of the human race. Their tribal deity is Renukāmba, the mother of Parasu Rāma, to whom pongal (boiled rice) is offered, and a goat sacrificed in the month of Thai (January-February). They have exogamous septs, such as Sulēgar, Powar, Mudugal, Sonappa, Bojagiri, etc., and have adopted the same Brāhmanical gōtras as the Bhāts or Bhatrāzus, *e.g.*, Gautama, Kāsyapa, Vasishta, and Bhāradwāja. Attached to them is a caste beggar, called Bhāt, who comes round at long intervals. He is said to keep the genealogies of the Khatri families. He ties a flag to a post of the house at which he intends to claim a meal, and, after partaking thereof, he receives information concerning the births and marriages, which have taken place in the family since his last visit. Girls are married both before and after puberty, and infant marriage is fashionable at the present day. The remarriage of widows is permitted, but a divorced woman may not marry again so long as her husband is alive. A man may not marry the widow of his brother, or of an agnate. The custom of mēnarikam, by which a man may marry his maternal uncle's daughter, is prohibited. Families belonging to one sept may give their daughters in marriage to men of another sept, from which, however, they are not allowed to receive girls as wives for their sons. For example, a man of a Sulēgar sept may give his daughters in marriage to men of the Powar sept, but may not take Powar girls as wives for his sons. But a certain elasticity in the rule is allowed, and the prohibition ceases after a certain number of generations by arrangement with the Bhāt. The marriage ceremonies last over seven days. On the first day, the deity Bharkodēv, who is represented

by seven quartz pebbles placed in a row on plantain leaves, is worshipped with offerings of fruit, etc., and a goat is sacrificed. The blood which flows from its cut neck is poured into a vessel containing cooked rice, of which seven balls are made, and offered to the pebbles. Towards evening some of the rice is thrown to the four cardinal points of the compass, in order to conciliate evil spirits. On the second day, the house is thoroughly cleansed with cow-dung water, and the walls are whitewashed. The eating of meat is forbidden until the marriage ceremonies are concluded. The third day is devoted to the erection of the marriage pandal (booth) and milk-post, and the worship of female ancestors (savāsne). Seven married women are selected, and presented with white rāvikes (bodices) dyed with turmeric. After bathing, they are sumptuously fed. Before the feast, the bridegroom's and sometimes the bride's mother, goes to a well, tank (pond) or river, carrying on a tray a new woman's cloth, on which a silver plate with a female figure embossed on it is placed. Another silver plate of the same kind, newly made, is brought by a goldsmith, and the two are worshipped, and then taken to the house, where they are kept in a box. The bridegroom and his party go in procession through the streets in which their fellow castemen live. When they reach the house of the bride, her mother comes out and waves coloured water to avert the evil eye, washes the bridegroom's eyes with water, and presents him with betel and a vessel filled with milk. The bride is then conducted to the bridegroom's house, where she takes her seat on a decorated plank, and a gold or silver ornament called sari or kanti is placed on her neck. She is further presented with a new cloth. A Brāhman purōhit then writes the names

of the contracting parties, and the date of their marriage, on two pieces of palm leaf or paper, which he hands over to their fathers. The day closes with the performance of gondala pūja, for which a device (muggu) is made on the ground with yellow, red, and white powders. A brass vessel is set in the centre thereof, and four earthen pots are placed at the corners. Pūja (worship) is done, and certain stanzas are recited amid the beating of a pair of large cymbals. On the fourth day, the bridal couple bathe, and the bridegroom is invested with the sacred thread. They then go to the place where the metal plates representing the ancestors are kept, with a cloth thrown over the head like a hood, and some milk and cooked rice are placed near the plates. On their way back they, in order to avert the evil eye, place their right feet on a pair of small earthen plates tied together, and placed near the threshold. The bride's mother gives the bridegroom some cakes and milk, after partaking of which he goes in procession through the streets, and a further ceremony for averting the evil eye is performed in front of the bride's house. This over, he goes to the pandal, where his feet are washed by his father-in-law, who places in his hands a piece of plantain fruit, over which his mother-in-law pours some milk. The bride and bridegroom then go into the house, where the latter ties the tāli on the neck of the former. During the tying ceremony, the couple are separated by a cloth screen, of which the lower end is lifted up. The screen is removed, and they sit facing each other with their bashingams (forehead chaplets) in contact, and rice is thrown over their heads by their relations. The Brāhman hands the contracting couple the wrist-threads (kankanams), which they tie on. These threads are, among most castes, tied at an earlier stage in the

marriage ceremonies. On the fifth day, seven betel nuts are placed in a row on a plank within the pandal, round which the bride and bridegroom go seven times. At the end of each round, the latter lifts the right foot of the former, and sweeps off one of the nuts. For every marriage, a fee of Rs. 12–5–0 must be paid to the headman of the caste, and the money thus accumulated is spent on matters such as the celebration of festivals, which affect the entire community. If the fee is not paid, the bride and bridegroom are not permitted to go round the plank the seventh time. On the sixth day, the bride receives presents from her family, and there is a procession at night. On the last day of the ceremonies, the bride is handed over to her mother-in-law by her mother, who says "I am giving you a melon and a knife. Deal with them as you please." The bride is taken inside the house by the mother-in-law and shown some pots containing rice into which she dips her right hand, saying that they are full. The mother-in-law then presents her with a gold finger-ring, and the two eat together as a sign of their new relationship.

The dead are cremated, and, when a married man dies, his corpse is carried on a palanquin to the burning-ground, followed by the widow. Near the pyre it is laid on the ground, and the widow places her jewelry and glass bangles on the chest. The corpse should be carried by the sons-in-law if possible, and the nomination of the bearers is indicated by the eldest son of the deceased person making a mark on their shoulders with ashes. On the third day after death, the milk ceremony takes place. Three balls of wheat-flour, mixed with honey and milk, are prepared, and placed respectively on the spot where the deceased breathed his last, where the bier was laid on the ground, and at

the place where the corpse was burnt, over which milk is poured. The final death ceremonies (karmāndhiram) are observed on the seventh or tenth day, till which time the eating of flesh is forbidden.

The headman of the Khatris, who is called Grāmani, is elected once a month, and he has an assistant called Vanja, who is appointed annually.

The Khatris are Saivites, and wear the sacred thread, but also worship various grāma dēvatas (village deities). They speak a dialect of Marāthi. The caste title is Sā, *e.g.*, Dharma Sā.

Kethree is described, in the Vizagapatam Manual, as "the caste of the Zamindar's family in Jeypore. It is divided into sixteen classes. They wear the paieta (sacred thread), and the Zamindar used formerly to sell the privilege of wearing it to any one who could afford to pay him twelve rupees. Pariahs were excluded from purchasing the privilege."

The Khatri agriculturists of the Jeypore Agency tracts in Vizagapatam are, Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao informs me, entirely distinct from the weaving Khatris of the south. They are divided into four septs, viz., Surya (Sun), Bhāg (tiger), Kochchimo (tortoise), and Nāg (cobra). Girls are married before puberty, and an Oriya Brāhman officiates at their marriages, instead of the customary Dēsāri. They do not, like other castes in the Agency tracts, give fermented liquor (madho) as part of the jholla tonka or bride-price, which consists of rice, a goat, cloths, etc. The marriage ceremonies are performed at the bride's house. These Khatris put on the sacred thread for the first time when they are married, and renew it from time to time throughout life. They are fair skinned, and speak the Oriya language. Their usual title is Pātro.

Khinbudi (bear).—A sept of Rōna.

Khodālo.—*See* Bāvuri.

Khodikāro.—A name for Panditos, derived from the stone (khodi), with which they write figures on the floor, when making astrological calculations.

Khodūra.—The name is derived from khodu, bangle. The Khodūras, Mr. Francis writes,* are "manufacturers of the brass and bell-metal bangles and rings ordinarily worn by the lower class Odiyas. Their headman is called Nahako Sāhu, and under him there are deputies called Dhoyi Nahako and Bēhara. There is a fourth functionary styled Aghopotina, whose peculiar duty is said to be to join in the first meal taken by those who have been excommunicated, and subsequently readmitted into the caste by the caste panchāyat (council). A quaint custom exists, by which honorific titles like Sēnāpati, Mahāpātro, Subuddhi, etc., are sold by the panchāyat to any man of the caste who covets them, and the proceeds sent to Pūri and Pratābpur for the benefit of the temples there. It is said that the original home of the caste was Orissa, and that it came to Ganjam with Purushōttam Dēva, the Māharāja of Pūri. In its general customs it resembles the Badhōyis." I am informed that the name of the fourth functionary should be Aghopotiria, or first leaf man, *i.e.*, the man who is served first at a public dinner.

Khoira.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a low caste of Oriya cultivators.

Khōja.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, eleven Khōjas are recorded as belonging to a Mussalman tribe of traders from Bombay.

---

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

For the following note on the Khōjas of Southern India, I am indebted to an article by Dr. J. Shortt.* "The true Kojahs, or eunuchs, are not numerous in Southern India. They are chiefly to be seen in the houses of wealthy Mussalman nobles, by whom they are placed at the head of their zenanas or harems. The Kojahs are properly divided into two classes: (1) Kojahs; (2) Hijras. Sometimes Hindus, Sūdras, and Brāhmans subject themselves to the operation (of castration), of their own accord from a religious impression. Others, finding themselves naturally impotent, consider it necessary to undergo the operation, to avoid being born again at a future birth in the same helpless state. The operation of castration is generally performed by a class of barbers, sometimes by some of the more intelligent of the eunuchs themselves, in the following manner. The patient is made to sit on an upturned new earthen pot, being previously well drugged with opium or bhang. The entire genitals being seized by the left hand, an assistant, who has a bamboo lath slit in the centre, runs it down quite close to the pubis, the slit firmly embracing the whole of the genitals at the root, when the operator, with a sharp razor, runs it down along the face of the lath, and removes penis, testicles and scrotum in one swoop, leaving a large clean open wound behind, in which boiling gingelly (*Sesamum indicum*) oil is poured to staunch the bleeding, and the wound covered over with a soft rag steeped in warm oil. This is the only dressing applied to the wound, which is renewed daily, while the patient is confined in a supine position to his bed, and lightly fed with conjee (rice gruel), milk, etc. During the operation,

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., II, 1873.

the patient is urged to cry out 'Dīn' (the faith in Mahomet) three times.

"Of the two classes, the Kojahs are the artificially created eunuchs, in contradistinction to the Hijras (impotents) or natural eunuchs. Some years ago there were three Kojahs at the head of the State prison or Royal Mahal at Vellore, in charge of some of the wives, descendants, and other female connections of Tippoo Sultan. These men were highly respected, held charges of considerable trust, and were Muhammadans by birth. Tales were often repeated that the zenana women (slaves and adopted girls) were in the habit of stripping them naked, and poking fun at their helplessness. There were two Kojahs in the employ of the late Nabob of the Carnatic. They were both Africans. On the death of the Nabob, the Government allowed one of them a pension of fifteen rupees a month.

"The second class, Hijras or natural eunuchs as they are termed, are not so, strictly speaking, but are said to be impotent. While some are naturally so from birth, others are impressed with a belief in childhood, and are dressed up in women's clothes, taught to ape their speech and manners, whilst a few adopt it as a profession in after-life. They are chiefly Mussalmans. The hair of the head is put up as in women, well oiled, combed, and thrown back, tied into a knot, and shelved to the left side, sometimes plaited, ornamented, and allowed to hang down the back. They wear the cholee or short jacket, the saree or petticoat, and put on abundance of nose, ear, finger, and toe rings. They cultivate singing, play the dhol (a drum), and attitudinise. They go about the bazaars in groups of half a dozen or more, singing songs with the hope of receiving a trifle. [Such a group

I saw at Sandūr, who, on hearing that I wished to photograph them, made tracks for another place.—*E. T.*] They are not only persistent, but impudent beggars, singing filthy, obscene, and abusive songs, to compel the bazaarmen to give them something. Should they not succeed, they would create a fire and throw in a lot of chillies, the suffocating and irritative smoke producing violent coughing, etc., so that the bazaarmen are compelled to yield to their importunity, and give them a trifle to get rid of their annoyance. While such were the pursuits in the day, at nightfall they resorted to debauchery and low practices by hiring themselves out to a dissipated set of Moslems, who are in the habit of resorting to these people for the purpose, whilst they intoxicate themselves with a preparation termed majoon, being a confection of opium, and a drink termed boja, a species of country beer manufactured from rāgi (*Eleusine Coracana*), which also contains bhang (Indian hemp). In addition to this, they smoke bhang. The Hijras are met with in most of the towns of Southern India, more especially where a large proportion of Mussalmans is found."

In Hyderabad, castration used to be performed at about the age of sixteen. A pit, 3½ feet deep, was dug in the ground, and filled with ashes. After the operation, the patient had to sit on the ashes, with crossed legs, for three days. The operation was performed, under the influence of narcotics, by a Pīr—the head of the Khōja community.

I am informed by Mr. G. T. Paddison that, at the annual festival of the Gadabas of Vizagapatam, thorns are set on a swing outside the shrine of the goddess. On these the priest or priestess sits without harm. If the priest is masculine, he has been made neuter. But,

if the village is not fortunate enough to possess a eunuch, a woman performs the ceremony.

The following notes were recorded by me on the occasion of an interview with some eunuchs living in the city of Madras :—

Hindu, aged about 30. Generative organs feebly developed. Is a natural eunuch. Speaks and behaves like a female. Keeps a stall, at which he sells cakes. Goes out singing and dancing with four other eunuchs, and earns from ten annas to a rupee in a night. There are, in Madras, about thirty eunuchs, who go about dancing. Others keep shops, or are employed as domestic servants.

One well acquainted with the Hindu eunuchs of Madras stated that, when a boy is born with ill-developed genitalia, his unnatural condition is a source of anxiety to his parents. As he grows up he feels shy, and is made fun of by his companions. Such boys run away from home, and join the eunuchs. They are taught to sing and dance, and carry on abominable practices. They are employed by dancing-girls, to decoy paramours to them. For this purpose, they dress up as dancing-girls, and go about the streets. At times of census, they return themselves as males engaged in singing and dancing.

Khond.—*See* Kondh.

Khongar.—*See* Kangara.

Kīchagāra.—A small class of Canarese basket-makers and beggars. The name is said to be derived from kichaku, meaning an imitative sound, in reference to the incessant noise which the Kīchagāras make when begging.

Kidāran (copper boiler).—A synonym for Malayālam artisans.

Kilakku Teru (east street).—A section of Kallan.

Killavar.—A sub-division of Tottiyan.

Killēkyāta.—The Killēkyātas are a Marāthi-speaking people, who amuse villagers with their marionette shows in the Telugu and Canarese countries. "They travel round the villages, and give a performance wherever they can secure sufficient patronage. Contributions take the form of money, or oil for the foot-lights."* "Their profession," Mr. S. M. Natesa Sastri writes,† "is enacting religious dramas before the village public (whence their name, meaning buffoon). The black kambli (blanket) is their screen, and any mandapa or village chāvadi, or open house is their stage. Night is the time for giving the performance. They carry with them pictures painted in colours on deer skins, which are well tanned, and made fine like parchment. The several parts of the picture representing the human or animal body are attached to each other by thin iron wires, and the parts are made to move by the assistance of thin bamboo splits, and thus the several actions and emotions are represented to the public, to the accompaniment of songs. Their pictures are in most cases very fairly painted, with variety and choice of colours. The stories chosen for representation are generally from the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhāratā, which they however call Rāvanyakathā and Pāndavakathā—the stories of Rāvana and the Pāndavas." The dead are buried in a seated posture.

Some of the women are engaged as professional tattooers.

Kimedi.—A local name for Koronos who live at Parlakimedi.

---

* Gazetteer of the Anantapur district. † Indian Review, VII, 1906.

Kindal (basket-maker).—A sub-division of Savara.

Kinkila (the koel or cuckoo).—A gōtra of Kurni. The cuckoo, named *Eudynamis honorata*, is the bird, whose crescendo cry, ku-il, ku-il, is trying to the nerves during the hot season.

Kinthali.—A sub-division of the Telugu Kālingis.

Kīra (parrot).—A sept of Gadaba. Kīra also occurs as a sub-division of Sondi.

Kīraikkāran.—Kīraikkāran is an occupational name, denoting those who cultivate kīrai (*Amarantus*). The Kīraikkārans are stated, in the Census Report, 1901, to be usually Agamudaiyans in Coimbatore. I gathered, however, that the name is given by Tamil-speaking people to the Kempati Okkiliyans of Coimbatore, a Canarese people who migrated thither from Kempati in Mysore. The majority of them cultivate kīrai and other edible vegetables, but some are petty traders or fishermen. Some of their marriage divisions are named after deities, *e.g.*, Masāni and Vīramashti, and one division is called Jōgi.

Kirāta (hunter).—A name assumed by Bēdars, Ēkāris, and other classes.

Kirgāniga.—Kirgāniga or Kirugāniga is the name of a sub-division of Gānigas, who express oils in wooden mills.

Kiriyam.—A sub-division of Nāyar. Also the Malayālam word for house name or sept.

Kiriyattil.—A sub-division of Nāyar.

Kizhakathi.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, as a sub-division of Paraiyan. The word means easterner, and a Paraiyan of North or South Arcot would call a Paraiyan of Madras by this name.

Koalaka (arrow).—An exogamous sept of Jātapu.

Kobbiriya.—A sub-division of Dōmb.

Kochattabannaya.—Kochattabannaya or Kojjarannāya (jāk tree, *Artocarpus integrifolia*, sept) is an exogamous sept of Bant.

Kochimo (tortoise).—A sept of Oriya Gaudo, Bosantiya, Bottada, Konda Dora, Mattiya, and Omanaito.

Kochuvālan.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, 1901, as a name for Ullādans.

Kōdaketti (umbrella tying).—A sub-division of Pānan.

Kodavili (sickle).—An exogamous sept of Karna Sālē.

Kodekal Hata-kāraru (cloth-weavers).—A sub-division of Dēvānga.

Kōdi (cock).—An exogamous sept of Kāpu. Thōrika occurs as a sept of Jātapus, who are said to revere a species of fowl called thōrika kōdi, and Kōdi Kandla (fowl's eyes) as a sept of Bōya.

Kodikkāl.—Kodikkāl, Kodikkar, or Kodikkālkāran, meaning betel vine man, is the occupational name of a sub-division of Vellālas, and of Labbai Muhammadans who cultivate the betel vine. In the Census Report, 1901, it is noted that those who gave this as the name of their caste returned their parent tongue as Tamil, and their title as Nāyakkan, and were therefore clubbed with Pallis. Kodikkāl is further a sub-division of the Shānāns, who derive the name from kōdi, a flag, and give flag-bearer as its significance. Other castes, however, make it to mean a betel garden, in reference to Shānāns who were betel vine growers. Kodikkāl Pillaimar is a synonym of the Sēnaikkudaiyāns, indicating Pillaimars who cultivate the betel vine.

Kodiyāl.—A sub-division of Kudubi.

Kōdla.—Kōdla (fowl) has been recorded as an exogamous sept of Tsākala, and Kōdla bochchu (fowl's feathers) as an exogamous sept of Kāpu.

Kōdu.—A form of Kondh. Also a sub-division of Konda Rāzu.

Kohōro.—A form of Kahar.

Koi.—*See* Kōya.

Koibarto.—A sub-division of Kēvuto.

Koil Pandala (keeper of the royal treasury).—One of the divisions of Kshatriyas in Travancore.

Koil Tampurān.—The following note is extracted from the Travancore Census Report, 1901. The Koil Tampurāns form a small community, made up of the descendants of the immigrant Kshatriya families from certain parts of Malabar lying to the north of Travancore and Cochin. They are also known as Koil Pantalas. In early records, the term Koviladhikārikal appears to have been used. Immemorial tradition connects the Koil Tampurāns with Chēramān Perumāl, and goes to say that their original settlement was Beypore. About 300 M.E. a few male members were invited to settle in Travancore, and form marital alliances with the ladies of the Travancore Royal House, known then as the Vēnāt Svarūpam. Houses were built for them at Kilimānūr, six miles from Attingal, where all the female members of the Royal Family resided. In M.E. 963, eight persons—three males and five females—from the family of Āliakkōtu, oppressed by the invasion of Tīpū Sultan, sought shelter in Travancore. Maharāja Rāma Varma received them kindly, and gave them the palace of the Tekkumkūr Rāja, who had been subjugated by Rāma Iyen Dalawah. This site in Changanachery is still recognised as Nīrāzhikkottāram. In 975 M.E. one of the five ladies removed to Kirtipuram near Kantiyūr

(Mavelikara tāluk), and thence to a village called Grāmam in the same tāluk. Another shifted to Pallam in the Kottayam tāluk, a third to Pāliyakkara in Tiruvalla, and a fourth, having no issue, continued to live at Changanachery with the fifth lady who was the youngest in the family. Rāja Rāja Varma Koil Tampurān, who married Rāni Lakshmi Bai, sovereign of Travancore from 985 to 990 M.E. was the eldest son of the lady that stayed at Changanachery. Their present house at that place, known as Lakshmipuram Kottāram, was named after the Koil Tampurān's royal consort. Rāja Rāja Varma's sister gave birth to three daughters and two sons. The eldest daughter and sons removed to Kartikapalli in 1040, and thence, in 1046, to Anantapuram in Haripad. In 1041, the second daughter and issue removed to Chemprōl in Tiruvalla, while the third continued to live at Changanachery. Thus there came into existence seven families of Koil Tampurāns, namely those of Kilimānūr, Changanachery, Anantapuram, Pallam, Chemprōl, Grāmam, and Pāliyakkare. Some time after 1040 M.E. (A.D. 1856), three more families, viz., those of Cherukōl, Kārāmma, and Vatakkēmatham, immigrated from North Malabar.

The Koil Tampurāns are all regarded as blood relations, and observe birth and death pollutions like Dāyādis among Brāhmans. They follow the matriarchal system of inheritance. Nambūtiri Brāhmans marry their ladies. Their religious ceremonies are the same as those of Nambūtiris, whom they resemble in the matter of food and drink. Their caste government is in the hands of the Nambūtiri Vaidikans.

Their ceremonies are the usual Brāhmanical Samskāras—Gātakarma, Nāmakarana, Annaprāsana, etc. Regarding the Nāmakarana, or naming, the only

noteworthy fact is that the first-born male always goes by the name of Rāja Rāja Varma. The Upanāyana, or investiture with the sacred thread, takes place in the sixteenth year of age. On the morning of the Upanāyana, Chaula or the tonsure ceremony is performed. It is formally done by the Nambūtiri priest in the capacity of Guru, just as the father does to his son among Brāhmans, and afterwards left to be completed by the Mārān. The priest invests the boy with the thread, and, with the sacrificial fire as lord and witness, initiates him in the Gāyatri prayer. The Koil Tampurāns are to repeat this prayer morning, noon and evening, like the Brāhmans, but are to do so only ten times on each occasion. On the fourth day, the boy listens to a few Vēdic hymns recited by the priest. There is not the prolonged course of severe discipline of the Brāhmanical Brahmachāri, which the Nambūtiris so religiously observe. The Samāvartana, or pupilage stage, is performed on the fifteenth day. The ceremony of proceeding to Benares is then gone through. Just as in the case of the Brāhmans, a would-be father-in-law intercedes, and requests the Snātaka (past Brahmachāri) to bless his daughter, and settle in life as a Grihastha. The Nambūtiri priest then steps in to remind the boy of his dharma (duty) as a Kshatriya, and gives him a sword symbolic of his pre-ordained function in society.

The marriage of a Koil Tampurān does not present many peculiar features. One item in the programme, called Dīkshavirippu, may be referred to. During all the four days of the marriage, the bride is confined to a special room, where a white cloth with a carpet over it is spread on the floor, and a lamp burns day and night. The ceremonial bridegroom is either an Aryappattar or a Nambūtiri, now generally a Nambūtiri. Of course,

the marriage is a mere ceremonial, and the bridegroom at the ceremony is not necessarily the spouse of actual life. His death deprives her of the right to wear the tāli, and makes her an Amangali (an inauspicious person) for all socio-religious purposes. At srāddhas (memorial service for the dead), the Tampurātti with her married husband alive faces the east, and one that has lost him has to look in the direction of Yamalōka (south).

Mr. Ravi Varma, the celebrated artist, who died recently, was a Koil Tampurān of Kilimānūr, an extensive village assigned to his ancestors rent-free for the military services they had rendered to the State in times of trouble.*

Kōkala (woman's cloth).—An exogamous sept of Golla.

Kokkara.—Recorded, in the Travancore Census Report, as a sub-division of Nāyar.

Kokkundia.—*See* Kukkundi.

Kōla (ear of corn).—An exogamous sept of Mēdara.

Kōlāri.—*See* Kōlayān.

Kolālo (arrack-seller).—A name of Sōndis.

Kolata Gudiya.—A name for Gudiyas engaged in agriculture.

Kōlayan.—It is recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that "the caste is found chiefly in the Kasaragōd tāluk of South Canara, and in the northern part of Malabar. In South Malabar, it is called Ūrāli. Its traditional occupation is herding cows, and it claims the privilege of supplying milk and ghee to certain Hindu temples, but at present most of its members are

* *See* Ravi Varma, the Indian Artist. Indian Press, Allahabad.

masons. It has two endogamous sections, Āyan or Kōl-Āyan, and Māriyan or Erumān" (Erumā, a cow-buffalo). It is further noted, in the same report under the heading Erumān, that "the people of the caste were originally buffalo drivers and keepers, and still follow their traditional occupation in the Kasaragōd tāluk of South Canara. In North Malabar, they are masons and bricklayers." The masonry work of temples is done by Kōlayans.

The name Kōlayan has been said to be derived from Golla and Ayan, meaning cowherd. Golla is, however, a Telugu word not used in the Malayālam country.

Members of the two sections, Kōlayan and Erumān (or Eruvān), are said not to intermarry. Women of both sections may affect sambandham (alliance) with Nāyars. Children born of such unions are regarded as somewhat inferior to those born of Kōlayan parents, and are not allowed to worship at the temples. The priests of the Kolāyans are called Mūthavan or Poduvan, and are usually elected by Rājas.

Kōlayan girls go through the mangalam or tāli-kettu ceremony before they reach puberty. On an auspicious day fixed by the Kanisan (astrologer), the girl sits on a plank in the middle room of the house, and four lamps are placed near her. Her father throws rice and flowers over her head, and ties the tāli (marriage emblem) on her neck. The girl, four women, and four girls, are fed in the middle room. On the following day, a priest (Vāthiyan) places rice, paddy (unhusked rice), tender cocoanut, betel leaves and areca nuts, before the girl. Men and women of the priest's family wave rice, cocoanuts, etc., in front of her both in the morning and afternoon. Finally, towards evening, a Vāthiyan woman waves the rice and other articles thrice, calling out

"Kolachi, Kolachi, Kolachi." The girl may then leave the middle room.

At the first menstrual period, a girl is under pollution for three days. On the first day, a cloth (māttu) is given to her by a washerwoman, and on the fourth day she receives one from a Malayan woman.

The dead are usually cremated. Daily, until the twelfth day of the death ceremonies, food is offered to the spirit of the deceased, on a dais set up outside the house, by the relatives. On the fifth day, all the agnates are purified by the Vāthiyan sprinkling water over them. On the twelfth day, the Vāthiyan draws the image of a man with vibūthi (sacred ashes) on the spot where the deceased breathed his last. Near the figure, cooked rice, vegetables, etc., are placed. The chief mourner offers these to the dead person, and makes a bundle of them in his cloth. Going outside the house, he kicks the dais already referred to with his foot, while the Vāthiyan holds one hand, and his relations the other hand or arm. He then bathes in a tank (pond) or river, while his hands are held in like manner.

Kōli.—In the Madras Census Report, 1901, the Kōlis are described as being "a Bombay caste of fishermen and boatmen in South Canara; also a low class of Bengal weavers found in Ganjam." The Kōlis who were investigated in Ganjam are an Oriya-speaking class, who are apparently Telugu people who have settled in the Oriya country as weavers of coarse cloths, traders, and agriculturists. They have Oriya titles such as Bēhara. They worship village deities (Tākurānis), are Saivites, and none of them have been converted to the Paramartho form of Vishnavism. The caste council, puberty and death ceremonies, are based on the common Oriya type, but the marriage rites are

an interesting blend of the Oriya and Telugu types of ceremonial. Thus the usual Telugu marriage post, but made of *Streblus asper* wood, is set up, and nine kinds of grain are placed near it. A bottu (marriage badge) is tied on the neck of the bride by the bridegroom, and the hands of the contracting couple are united (hasthagōnthi) as among the Oriyas.

Kōliyan.—The Kōliyans are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as "a weaver caste, the members of which were originally Paraiyans, but now do not eat or intermarry with that caste." They are largely found in the Tanjore and Madura districts, and are divided into various nādus (territories) and kuppams (settlements). Those at Pattukottai, for example, belong to Ambu Nādū, and are sub-divided into five kuppams. Many of the Kōliyans are engaged in weaving coarse white cloths, while some work as field labourers. As some Paraiyans have Sāmbān (Siva) as their title, so the title of the Kōliyans is Īsan (god). At times of marriage, the names of persons must not be mentioned without this title, *e.g.*, one who is, in everyday life, called Ponnan is addressed as Īsa Ponnan.

An interesting point in connection with the first puberty ceremonial of a girl is that, on the sixteenth day, when she bathes, a withe of a creeper (*Dalbergia*, sp.) made into a loop, is passed round her body by a barber from head to foot thrice, without touching her. If this is not done, it is believed that the girl is not free from pollution.

There are two forms of marriage ceremony, called chinna (little) and periya (big) kalyānam. The former is resorted to by those who cannot afford the more elaborate ceremonial. The sister of the bridegroom is sent to the house of the bride on an auspicious day.

She there ties the tāli (marriage badge) on the bride's neck, and conducts her to the house of the bridegroom. Women who are thus married may not take part in the marriage of their children. More especially, they may not decorate them with garlands and flowers, unless they have themselves performed the sadangu rite. In this, which is usually carried out a day or two before the child's marriage, the husband and wife sit on planks, and, after being decorated, and the performance of wave offerings (ārathi), the former ties the tāli on his wife's neck.

In the periya kalyānam, the bridegroom goes on a horse to the bride's house, where he is met by her brother, who is also on horseback. They exchange garlands, and proceed to the marriage pandal (booth). The bridegroom receives from the bride's father a cocoanut, and the bride seats herself on a bench. The bridegroom gives her the cocoanut, and ties the tāli on her neck. They then exchange garlands, and their fingers are linked together. All these items must be performed as quickly as possible, in accordance with a saying that the tāli should be tied without dismounting from the horse, which one is riding. Before the tāli is tied, the contracting couple go through the sadangu ceremony, in which a loop of cotton thread is passed over them from head to foot, without touching them. Then the kankanams, or wrist threads, are tied on their wrists. The milk-post and marriage pots are set up within the pandal, and the bride and bridegroom prostrate themselves before them, and salute their maternal uncles, parents and relations, and lastly the musicians. The day's proceedings terminate with a feast, at the conclusion of which hands are washed within the house. For six days the bride and bridegroom pay visits to each

other alternately, and, on the seventh day, the wrist-threads, marriage pots, and milk-post are removed. During marriage and other auspicious ceremonies, coloured water, into which leaves of *Bauhinia variegata* are thrown, are waved (ārathi).

On ceremonial occasions, and at times of worship, the Kōliyans put on Saivite sect marks. Among other deities, they worship Aiyanar, Pattavanswāmi, and Pothiamman.

The dead are burnt, and the body is placed in a seated posture with fingers and toes tied together. On the way to the burning-ground, a widow goes round the corpse, and breaks a pot containing water. On the day after the funeral, the calcined bones are collected, and arranged so as to represent a human figure, to which food is offered. The final death ceremonies (karmāndhiram) are performed on the sixteenth day. A mass of cooked rice, vegetables, and meat, is placed within an enclosure, round which the relations go in tears.

Kollakar.—There are about seven hundred members of this community at Cochin, to which place the Kollakars, or people of Kollam, are said to have come from Quilon (Kollam) in Travancore one or two centuries ago. The majority of the men work as coolies on board steamers, and a few as fishermen. The women of the poorer classes twist rope and sell fish, while the others make lace. A few hold appointments under the Government, and, in 1907, two had passed the Matriculation examination of the Madras University. They are Roman Catholics, and are said to have been converted to Christianity by the Portuguese. They marry among themselves. The Kollakars are also found at Calicut, Cannanore, Mahē, and Tellicherry, and are mainly occupied in fishing, rope-making, and making fishing-nets.

A few at Tellicherry are employed as carpenters, tailors, and petty shopkeepers.

Kolla Kurup.—The Kolla Kurups of Malabar are described, in the Gazetteer of Malabar, as a sub-caste of, or a caste allied to, the Kammālans. "They combine two professions, which at first sight seem strangely incongruous, shampooing or massage, and the construction of the characteristic leather shields of Malabar. But the two arts are intimately connected with the system of combined physical training, as we should now call it, and exercise in arms, which formed the curriculum of the kalari (gymnasium), and the title Kurup is proper to castes connected with that institution." Among Kolla Kurups, the following symbolical ceremony is necessary to constitute a valid divorce. "The husband and the wife's brother stand east and west respectively of a lighted lamp placed in the yard of the woman's original home. The husband pulls a thread from his cloth, and approaches the lamp, and breaks the thread saying 'Here is your sister's acchāram.'"

Kollan.—The blacksmiths are iron-workers among the Malayālam Kammālans. "These Malabar Kollans," Mr. H. A. Stuart writes,* "are said to practice fraternal polyandry to a greater extent even than the rest of the Malabar artizan castes. Kollans are divided into (1) Tī (fire) Kollan, (2) Perum (big) Kollan, (3) Tīperum Kollan, (4) Irumbu (iron) Kollan. There are also Kadacchil Kollan (knife-grinders) and Tōl Kollan (leather-workers). These are of inferior status, on account of the nature of their professions."

Kollar.—A section of Tottiyan, the full name of which is Yerrakollavāru or Yerrakolla Tottiyar. Kollar

* Madras Census Report, 1891.

is a corrupt Tamil form of Golla, to which caste the Tottiyans trace their descent.

Kolli (fire-brand).—A sub-division of Kādu Kurumba.

Kolli (a hill-range, the Kollimalais).—A sub-division of Malayālis.

Komāli (buffoon).—An exogamous sept of Oddē.

Kōmanāndi.—A sub-division of Āndis, who go about naked, except for a small loin cloth (kōmanam).

Komāro.—Oriya blacksmiths. *See* Badhōyi.

Kōmati.—The Kōmatis form the great trading caste of the Madras Presidency, and are found in almost all the districts thereof. They are further found in the Mysore State, Bombay Presidency, Berar, Central Provinces, and as far north-west as Baroda. Their wide distribution accounts for the great variety which prevails in the minor details of the religious and social ceremonials.

The name Kōmati has been derived in many different ways. By some it is said to be from ko-mati, meaning fox-minded. This has reference to the cunning of the Kōmatis in business, and is undoubtedly the outcome of their unpopularity with their customers. The phrase Kōmatiguttu (the secrecy of a Kōmati) is said to be a common one. Others say that it is from gō-mati, meaning the possessor of cows, one of the ordained duties of Vaisyas being the protecting of cows. Others, again, say that it is from gō-mati, meaning cow-minded. A modern redaction of the Kanyakā Purāna, the sacred book of the Kōmatis, gives this derivation. According to this work, the Kōmatis did severe penance, and were consequently invited to live in heaven. Their continued absence from this world gave rise to serious trouble, and Vishnu accordingly asked them to return thither for

the good of mankind. They, however, refused to do so. Vishnu then called for Siva, and asked him to induce them to return. Siva brought a cow, and directed all the Kōmatis to get into its right ear. From there they saw gloriously decorated towns, with magnificent temples, pleasure gardens, etc., and begged permission to live in them. Siva assented, and they speedily began to march off to their new abodes. But, almost immediately, a huge conflagration came in view, and began to overwhelm them. Terror-stricken, they cried out to Siva to help them in their trouble. He consented on condition that they would return to the mortal world. This they accordingly did. Siva gave them the name of Gōmati, because they exhibited as much fear at the conflagration as a cow would when anything untoward happened. Yet another derivation of Kōmati is gō-mati, meaning sprung from the cow in accordance with the above legend, or cow-gored in reference to the story that the ancestors of the Kōmatis commingled in a cow-shed, where a pregnant woman was gored by a cow. The derivation ku-mati, meaning evil-minded, is grammatically impossible. The Kōmatis are said to have originally lived, and still live in large numbers on the banks of the Godāvari river. One of the local names thereof is Gōmati or Gōmti, and the Sanskrit Gōmati would, in Telugu, become corrupted into Kōmati.

The Kōmatis everywhere speak Telugu, and are devoted to their mother-tongue. There is a common proverb among them, "Telugu thēta, Aravam adhvānam," meaning that Telugu is easy (has an easy flow), and Tamil is wretched. "Of all Dravidian languages," Mr. Henry Morris writes, "Telugu is the sweetest and most musical. It is exceedingly mellifluous, and sounds

harmonious even in the mouth of the most vulgar and illiterate. It has justly been called the Italian of the East." Kōmatis are clever at learning languages other than their own. In the Tamil and Canarese districts, they are conversant with the languages thereof, and in Bombay they speak Marāthi. In the Ganjam and Vizagapatam Agencies, they speak the Kondh and Savara languages very fluently.

As a commercial caste, the Kōmatis have a secret trade language of their own, which is substantially the same all over the country. It will be seen from the tables given how complete their numerical tables are, ranging, as they do, from one pie to a thousand rupees. It will be observed that the rupee is represented by the word thēlupu, which means white. Some Tamil trading castes in like manner call the rupee vellē (white):—

1. *Pie table.*

	PIES.		PIES.
Nakili batu	1	Rāyam batu	4
Ke batu	2	Rāyam nakili batu	5
Kēvu nakili batu	3		

2. *Anna table.*

	ANNAS.		ANNAS.
Thāpi kamanālu	$\frac{1}{4}$	Uddulam anālu	3
Nakili ana	$\frac{1}{2}$	Uddulam nakili anālu	$3\frac{1}{2}$
Kēv ana	1	Kungidu anālu	4
Kēvan nakili ana	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Sūlalu anālu	12
Rāyam anālu	2		

The word sūlalu is connected with trisūlam, the trident emblem of Siva, and sometimes used to denote three annas.

3. *Rupee table.*

	RS.		RS.
Thāpi thēlupu	¼	Mūlam gālālu	50
Nakili „	½	Thīpanam gālālu ...	60
Kē „	1	Maram gālālu	70
Rāyam „	2	Thāmam „	80
Uddulam thēlupu ...	3	Navaram gālālu ...	90
Do. nakili thēlupu...	3½	Kē savalu	100
Panam thēlupu	4	Rāyam savalu	200
Mūlam „	5	Uddulam savalu ...	300
Thīpam „	6	Panam „ ...	400
Māram „	7	Mūlam „ ...	500
Thāmam „	8	Thīpanam „ ...	600
Navaram „	9	Māram „ ...	700
Gālam „	10	Thāmam „ ...	800
Rāyam gālālu	20	Navaram „ ...	900
Uddulam gālālu	30	Gālam „ ...	1,000
Panam „	40		

4. *Varāham* (*pagoda*) *table.*

Kē makaram	1	Thīpanam makaram ...	6
Rāyam makaram	2	Māram „ ...	7
Uddulam „	3	Thāmam „ ...	8
Panam „	4	Navaram „ ...	9
Mūlam „	5	Gālam „ ...	10

A common saying is that, if you commence at gālam, it will be settled at mūlam, or, in plain language, begin at ten varāhams, and the bargain will be closed at five. When one man says to another "Dōtu" or "Dōtra," it means strike the bargain. If a Kōmati is the purchaser, and another says to him "Dōt ko," it means take it.

The Kōmatis are a highly organised caste. In each place where they are settled there is a Pēdda Setti, who, among the Kalinga Kōmatis, is known as Puri Setti or Sēnāpathi. Among the latter, there is also a headman for several villages, who is styled Kularāju or Vaisyarāju. Each Pēdda Setti is assisted by a Mummadi Setti, who

assembles the castemen for the settlement of important questions, by fines, excommunication, etc. There is further a caste guru Bhāskarāchārya, whose duties are more religious than social. Kōmatis have recourse to the established Courts of Justice only as a last resort. They are consulted by other castes in the settlement of their disputes, and it must be said to their credit that their decisions are usually sound, and bear ample testimony to the confidence which is placed in them.

The Kōmatis are, broadly speaking, divided into two great sections, called Gavara and Kalinga. The former live as far north of Vizianagram, and are then replaced by the latter. The Gavaras or Gauras are said to be so called because, by following the caste goddess Kanyakamma into the fire-pits, they maintained the gauravam or social status of the caste. According to another version, they are so called because they revere Gauri (Parvati), the consort of Siva, whose incarnation was the goddess Kanyakamma. The Kalinga Kōmatis are those who live in the old Kalinga or Kling country, which extended roughly from Vizagapatam to Orissa. They are forbidden to settle beyond Rāmatīrtham, a place of pilgrimage close to Vizianagram. The story goes that their ancestors lived at Padmanābham, the hill close to Bimlipatam, well known from the battle which took place close to it in 1794, and there sustained great losses. Hence the place was deserted, and has ever since been regarded as inauspicious. The Kōmatis have since that time not resided at any place from which the hill can be seen. In fact, they make their first appearance at Chīpurupalli, and increase in numbers as we go north-eastward. The Kalinga Kōmatis believe themselves to be Gavara Kōmatis, who became separated from the main stock owing to their emigration from their original

home. Their meat-eating habit has, they say, widened the breach which separates the two divisions.

While the Kalinga Kōmatis form a fairly compact division by themselves, the Gavaras have become more and more sub-divided. Their sub-divisions are either territorial, occupational, or religious in character. Thus there are Penukonda and Vēginādu Kōmatis, of whom the former belong to the town of Penukonda in the Godāvari district, and the latter to the Vēgi or Vēngi country, the former name of part of the modern Kistna district. Again, there are Trinikas or Traivarnikas (third caste people), who are invariably Vaishnavas, and to which section a good many of the Kōmatis in the city of Madras belong. Lingadhāri Kōmatis are found mostly in the Vizagapatam, Godāvari, Guntūr and Kistna districts. They wear the lingam in a gold or silver casket. Besides these, there are the Siva, Vaishnava, and Mādhva Kōmatis, of which the last are mostly found in the Bellary district. Of occupational sub-divisions, the following may be noted :—Nūnē (oil) ; Nēthi (ghī, clarified butter) ; Dūdi (cotton) ; Uppu (salt) ; Gōnē (gunny-bag) ; Gantha (torn cloth). Lastly, there are other divisions, of which the origin dates back to the time of Kanyakamma, the caste goddess. Thus, there are those who entered the fire-pits with Kanyakamma, and those who did not. The former are known as Vēgina, and the latter as Bēri, which is said to be a corruption of Bēdari, meaning those who fled through fear. All Gavara Kōmatis are said to be descended from those who entered the fire-pits. The majority of the Kōmatis of the Sandūr State, in the Bellary district, belong to the Kallankanadavaru section, which is said to be descended from those who sat on the stone (kallu) mantapa outside the Penukonda Kanyakamma temple,

when the question whether to enter the fire-pits or not was being discussed by the caste elders.

The mutual relations between the various sub-divisions vary much. Broadly speaking, Gavaras and Kalingas do not intermarry, and the objection to intermarriage is due to several causes. The former, according to the caste Purāna, gave their lives to their goddess, while the latter did not. Moreover, the former do not partake of animal food and spirituous drinks, whereas the latter do. Lingadhāris and ordinary Saivites intermarry, as also do Saivites and Mādhvas. Gavaras and Traivarnikas occasionally intermarry, but such marriages are looked down upon. The Traivarnikas, like the Kalingas, eat animal food. The occupational sub-divisions neither intermarry nor interdine. Socially, the Gavaras are held in the highest esteem, while the Beris are regarded as the lowest in the social scale.

The sub-divisions are split up into septs, which are of a strictly exogamous character. That these originated in totemistic belief seems to be supported by what remains of these beliefs at the present day. All the sub-divisions contain such septs, which are very numerous, the names of as many as a hundred and twenty having been collected. The tendency for a long time past has been to reduce the number to a hundred and two, to represent the number of families which followed Kanyakamma to the fire-pits. It would be tedious to enumerate the names of all these septs, from which the following, with the corresponding totems, are selected :—

(*a*) *Plants.*

Munikula	Agasi (*Sesbania grandiflora*).
Amalaka or Usiri ...	Amalaka or Usiri (*Phyllanthus Emblica*).
Anupa or Anupāla ...	Anupala (*Dolichos Lablab*).
Tulasi or Tulashishta.	Tulasi (*Ocimum sanctum*).

(*a*) *Plants*—cont.

Chinta, Chintya, or Varachinta.	Chinta (*Tamarindus indica*).
Vakkala	Vakkalu (*Areca Catechu*).
Puchcha	Puchcha (*Citrullus Colocynthis*).
Padma-sista	Padma (red lotus).
Kamala	Kamalam (white lotus).
Aranta	Arati (*Musa sapientum* : plantain).
Thōtakula	Thōtakūra (*Amarantus*, sp.).
Uthakula	Uththarēni (*Achyranthes aspera*).
Mandu	Māmadikāya (*Mangifera indica*).
Dikshama	Drākshapandu (grapes).
Venkōla	Vankāya (*Solanum Melongena* : brinjal).
Sauna	Sāmanthi (*Chrysanthemum indicum*).

(*b*) *Animals.*

Gōsīla, Sathya Gōsīla, and Uthama Gōsīla.	Cow.
Asthi	Elephant.
Enupa	Buffalo.
Ghōnta	Horse.
Ananta	Cobra.
Bhramada or Bhramara.	Bee.

(*c*) *Heavenly bodies.*

Arka or Sūrya ...	Sun.
Chandra, Chandra Sishta, Suchandra, or Vannavamsam.	Moon.

It may be observed that the totems are variously termed gōtram, vamsam, and kulam. The first of these is in imitation of the Brāhman gōtras. Vamsam is the bams of the Agency tracts of Ganjam, Vizagapatam, and the Godāvari districts. The name means bamboo, and denotes a family, whose branches are as countless as those of a bamboo. Kulam is used as the equivalent of

group or family. The totem objects are revered in the usual way, and no secret is made of the reverence shown to them. In regard to plant totems, it is stated that, if the totem objects are not strictly treated as tabu, delinquents will be born as insects for seven generations. But an exception is allowed. A person who wishes to eat the forbidden plant may do so by annually performing the funeral ceremonies of the totem ancestor at Gāya, the great Hindu place of pilgrimage where obsequial ceremonies to ancestors are performed.

In recent times, the Kōmatis have claimed to be the Vaisyas mentioned in the Vēdic Purusha-sūkta. Accordingly, the totems have been arranged under the different Brāhmanical gōtras, whose pravaras have been appropriated. Thus, Munikula and four others are grouped under Madgalya Rishi gōtra, whose pravara is given for all the five. Similarly, Vakkāla kula and another kula come under Vāyavya Rishi; Ghōnta kula under Goupaka Rishi; Arati, Arisishta and a few others under Atri Rishi; Anupa kula under Agasthya Rishi, and so on. It is said that the totem names are secret names (sankēta nāmamulu) given by Kanyakamma, in order that the bearers thereof may be distinguished from those who did not take up her cause. All sub-divisions of the caste, however, have these septs in common.

In the northern parts of the Madras Presidency, the sept is further sub-divided into sections called intipērulu (house names). These are either named after some distinguished ancestor, or the place where the family once lived before emigrating to their present abode. These intipērulu are purely exogamous.

A Kōmati can claim his maternal uncle's daughter in marriage, in accordance with the custom of mēnarikam. The rigidity with which this right is exercised is testified

by the sacred book of the caste—the Kanyakā Purāna. On their descent from heaven, it is said, the Kōmatis settled in eighteen towns (ashtā dasapuramulu), which had been built by Visvakarma under the orders of Siva. These towns are said to be situated in a tract of country sixty-four yojanas in extent, and bounded on the east by the Gautami (Godāvari), on the south by the sea, on the west by the Gōstani, and on the north by the Ganges. Of these, Penukonda, in the modern Godāvari district, was the capital. In it are the temples of Nagariswaraswāmi (dedicated to Siva), and Janardhanaswāmi (dedicated to Vishnu). Its Pedda Setti was Kusama Srēshti, and his wife was Kusamāmba. He performed Putra Kāmēshti sacrifice, and was blessed with a son and daughter. The former was named Virupāksha, and the latter Vāsavāmbika (Vāsavakanya, Kanyakamma, or Kanyaka Paramēswari). The girl was possessed of indescribable beauty. Vishnu Vardhana, the son of Vijayarka of the lineage of the moon, who had his capital at Rājamundry, while on a pleasure tour round his dominions, halted at Penugonda, on learning that it was ruled by Setti Rājas, who paid no tribute to him. Being informed of his arrival by their boys, the caste elders, headed by Kusuma Setti, welcomed him, and took him in procession through the town. Then the women of the place waved ārathi before him. Among them was the beautiful Vāsavāmbika, with whom the king instantly fell in love. He proposed to her father that he should give her in marriage to himself, and in return obtain the gift of half of his kingdom. Kusuma Srēshti protested, and said that the sāstras were against such a union. The king, through his minister, threatened that he would plunder his town, take him prisoner, and, with the riches of the place, carry off his daughter,

and marry her. The Setti chief and his compatriots prayed for time to think over the matter, and retired. The chief then called a meeting of the castemen, at which it was decided that they should make a false promise to the king that they would give the girl in marriage to him, and send him off with a dinner, to return to Penugonda for the marriage after the lapse of a couple of months. Meanwhile, the boys of the town assembled, and resolved that the dinner ought not to be given. They informed their elders of this resolution, and were commissioned to induce the king to leave the town without it. This they did, with the ambiguous promise that, if they did not give the girl in marriage to him, they would kill themselves. On this, the king went off towards his capital, and Kusuma Setti called a caste meeting of the eighteen towns, at which various proposals were made. One proposed that the girl should not be given in marriage, and that, if the king came to claim her hand, he should be driven off. Another proposed that they should give the girl to the king, and save themselves from ruin. Others suggested that it would be best to marry the king to a substituted girl, to secrete the coveted girl, or to bribe the ministers to induce the king to abandon his intention of marrying her. The last of these proposals was adopted, and a few elders were sent to Rājamundry, to negociate the affair. They first argued that, though they promised to give the girl in marriage, the promise was made through fear of the king's anger, and they could not give the girl in contravention of the rule of mēnarikam. The king, in his fury, ordered that the troops should immediately besiege the eighteen towns, imprison the inhabitants in dark dungeons, and carry off the girl in a palanquin. On this, the envoys heavily bribed the ministers, and begged them

not to march the army on their towns. But the king would not yield, and sent his troops on Penugonda. The envoys returned home, and narrated their sad tale. A further meeting of the castemen was called at the instance of Bhāskarāchārya, the caste guru, and it was resolved that all who wished to maintain the caste rule of mēnarikam should prepare to kill themselves in burning fire-pits. The majority fled rather than comply with the resolution. Those, however, who determined to sacrifice themselves in the fire-pits were 102 gōtras in number, and they assembled in council, and asked Kusuma Srēshti to induce his daughter (who was only seven years old) to die with them. To this she consented, and showed herself in her true form of Paramēsvari, the wife of Siva. On this, the Setti chief returned to his castemen, who asked him to get 103 fire-pits ready in the western portion of the town before the arrival of the king. These were accordingly dug, and decorated with festoons and plantain trunks at the four corners. Then the heads of the 102 gōtras assembled, with their wives, in the courtyard of the temple of Nagarēsvaraswāmi, where Vāsavāmbika was symbolically married to the god. The headmen then tied on vīra kankanams (heroes' wrist-threads), and marched in a body, with Vāsavāmbika, to the fire-pits. There they gave counsel to their children that they should not ask vōli (bride-price) for the marriage of their daughters, or communicate their secrets to females, or allow karnams (village accountants), rulers, unbelievers, or those universally abused into their homes. They further counselled them to give their daughters in marriage to the sons of their paternal aunts, even though they should be black-skinned, plain, blind of one eye, senseless, or of vicious habits, and though their horoscopes did not agree, and

the omens were inauspicious. They were warned that, if they failed in so doing, they would lose their riches, and misfortune would fall on their families. Moreover, full power was given to the castemen to excommunicate the delinquents, and put them outside the town limits. If the transgressors subsequently repented, they were, after the lapse of six months, to be sent to Kāsi (Benares), bathe in the Ganges, and return to their home. There they were to openly express their regret for their past conduct, fast the whole day, feed Brāhmans, and present them with three hundred cows, and hear the Mahābhāratha during the night. On the following day, they were again to fast, present two hundred cows to Brāhmans and feast them, and hear the Rāmayana during the night. On the third day, they were once more to fast, present a hundred cows, and hear the Bhāgavatam during the night. On the fourth day, they were again to feast Brāhmans, and worship Nagarēsvaraswāmi of Penugonda, and thus purge themselves from the sin of contravening the rule of mēnarikam. But they were not bound to follow the rule, if the paternal aunt's son was totally blind, deaf, insane, stricken with disease, a eunuch, thief, idiot, leper, dwarf, or immoral, or if an old man or younger than the girl. The children were further advised to respect, at the time of their marriage, the families whose heads went as envoys to the king at Rājamundry, and the boys who made false promises to the king, and induced him to withdraw to his capital. The heads of the families then made various gifts to Brāhmans, and asked Vāsavāmbika to enter the pit. In her true form of Paramēsvari, she blessed those gōtras which had resolved to follow her, and announced that those who had fled would be nameless and without caste. She then declared that, immediately Vishnu

Vardhana entered Penugonda, his head would fall severed from his neck. Finally, she invoked Brahma not to create thenceforth beautiful girls in the caste in which she was born, and prayed that in future they should be short of stature, with gaping mouth, disproportionate legs, broad ears, crooked hands, red hair, sunken eyes, dilated eye-balls, insane looks, broad noses and wide nostrils, hairy body, black skin, and protruding teeth. She then jumped into her pit, and immediately afterwards the heads of the 102 gōtras, with their wives, fell into their respective pits, and were reduced to ashes. On the morrow, Vishnu Vardhana started on his journey from Rājamundry to Penugonda. Brāhmans portended evil, and a voice from heaven said that he would lose his life. An evil spirit obstructed him, and it rained blood. Lightning struck men, and numerous other signs of impending evil occurred. Arrived at Penugonda, Vishnu Vardhana was informed that the castemen and Vāsavāmbika had been burnt in the fire-pits. Stunned by the news, he fell from his elephant, and his head was severed from his body, and broke into a thousand pieces. His broken head and body were carried by his followers to Rājamundry, and cremated by his son Rāja Rāja Narēndra. Then the latter pacified the citizens of Penugonda, and appointed Virupāksha, the son of Kusuma Srēshti, Pedda Setti of the towns. The 102 families performed funeral rites for their dead parents, visited Kāsi and Rāmēsvaram, and built a temple in honour of Vāsavāmbika at Penugonda, in which they placed an image in her name, and worshipped it ever afterwards.

Popular versions of the story here related from the Purāna are told all over Southern India, where Kōmatis live. One of the most singular of these is narrated by

Bishop Whitehead.* "The story," he writes, "goes that, in ancient days, there was a bitter hatred between the Kōmatis, who claim to belong to the Vaisya caste, and the Mlechas or barbarians. When the Kōmatis were getting worsted in the struggle for supremacy, they requested Parvati, the wife of Siva, to come and deliver them. It so happened that about that time Parvati was incarnate as a girl of the Kōmati caste, who was exceedingly beautiful. The Mlechas demanded that she should be given in marriage to one of their own people, and the refusal of the Kōmatis led to severe fighting, in which the Kōmatis, owing to the presence of the avatar of Siva among them, were completely victorious, and almost exterminated their enemies. After their victory, the Kōmatis entertained doubts as to the chastity of the girl, and compelled her to purify herself by passing through fire. This she did, and disappeared in the fire, resuming her real shape as Parvati, and taking her place beside Siva in heaven. Her last words were a command to the Kōmatis to worship her, if they wished their caste to prosper."

It is impossible to identify with certainty the Vishnu Vardhana of the Purāna. There are as many as eleven individuals of that name known in Eastern Chalukyan history. The Purāna refers to Vishnu Vardhana, the son of Vijayarka, who had his capital at Rājamundry. His son, according to the same authority, was Rāja Rāja Narēndra. According to the Mackenzie manuscripts, the town of Rājamundry was founded by a king named Vijayāditya Mahēndra, who has not been identified. Dr. Fleet is of opinion that Vishnu Vardhana VI, who ruled between 918 and 925 A.D., was the first to

---

* Madras Museum Bull., V. 3, 1907.



KŌMATI.

occupy, and re-name it. He, therefore, called himself Rājamahēndra. Amma II, who ruled between 945 and 970 A.D., bore the same title. His brother and successor was Danarnaya (970—73 A.D.). Passing over the hiatus of thirty years, when the country was in the hands of the Chōlas, we come to the reign of Saktivarman, the eldest son of Danarnaya. If we are to believe the Kanyaka Purāna, then we must identify this Saktivarman with its Vijayarka. Saktivarman's successor, according to inscriptions, was Vimalāditya, who must be identified with the Vishnu Vardhana of the Purāna. Vimalāditya's son, according to inscriptions, was Rāja Rāja I, surnamed Vishnu Vardhana VIII. He has been identified with the Rāja Rāja Narēndra of current tradition in the Telugu country, to whom Nannayya Bhatta dedicated his translation of the Mahābhāratha. He must also be the Rāja Rāja Narēndra of the Purāna. If that is so, we must set down the cardinal incidents mentioned in it to the first quarter of the 11th century A.D. The actual spots where the principal events of the tragedy were enacted are still pointed out at Penugonda. Thus, the garden in which king Vishnu Vardhana halted is said to be the site on which the hamlet of Vanampalli (meaning village of gardens) stands at present. The spot where the huge fire-pit for Kanyakamma was dug is pointed out as having been in field Nos. 63/3 and 63/4 to the north of the now non-existent Nagarasamudram tank. The 102 other pits were, it is said, in the fields round the bund (embankment) of this tank. The tank is now under cultivation, but faint traces of the bund are said to be still visible. It is about two furlongs to the north-west of the temple of Nagarēsvaraswāmi. It is locally believed that Kanyakamma's fire-pit was, on the morning following her tragic

end, found to contain, among the ashes, a golden likeness of herself, which was placed by the side of the image of Nagarēswara, to whom she had been married. Long afterwards, the golden image was removed, and one in stone substituted for it, in accordance, it is said, with the direction of Kanyakamma, who appeared to one of the townsmen in a dream.

The temple of Nagarēsvaraswāmi has several inscriptions on slabs, built into its prākāra, and elsewhere. One of these is on the gateway inside the prākāra walls. It opens with a glowing description of the powers of Nagarēsvaraswāmi in giving blessings and gifts, and refers to Penugonda as one of the eighteen towns built by Visvakarma, and presented by Siva to the Kōmatis as a place of residence. The object of the inscription appears to be to record the restoration by one Kothalinga, a Kōmati whose genealogy is given, of the great town (Penugonda), which had been burnt to ashes by a Gajapathi king. He is also stated to have made grants of tanks, wells, and pleasure gardens, for the benefit of Nagarēsvaraswāmi, for whose daily offerings and the celebration of festivals he provided by the grants of the villages of Mummadi, Ninagēpūdi, Vāranāsi, Kālkavēru, and Mathampūdi, all included in the town of Penugonda. Various inscriptions show that, from so early a time as 1488 A.D., if not from still earlier times, the temple had become popular with the Kōmatis, and got intertwined with the statements now found in the Purāna. Rai Bahādur V. Venkayya, Government Epigraphist, writes to say that the Tēki plates found in the Rāmachandrāpuram taluk of the Godāvari district, and published by Dr. E. Hultzsch,* may refer to some Kōmatis. The

* Epigraphia Indica, VI, 1900–1901.

edict contained in it was, according to Dr. Hultzsch, probably issued about 1086 A.D., and records the grant of certain honorary privileges on the descendants of a family of merchants belonging to the Teliki family.

That about the end of the 14th century A.D., the story of Kanyakamma was popular is obvious from the Telugu version of the Markandēya Purāna, which was composed by the poet Mārana, the disciple of Tikkana, the part author of the Telugu Bhārata. In this Purāna, the following episode, which bears a close resemblance to the story narrated in the Kanyaka Purāna, is introduced. A king, named Vrushadha, while on a hunting expedition, killed a cow, mistaking it for a "bison." He was cursed by Bhābhravya, the son of a Rishi, who was in charge of it, and in consequence became a Sūdra, by name Anaghakāra. He had seven sons, a descendant of one of whom was Nābhāga, who fell in love with a Kōmati girl, and asked her parents to give her in marriage to him. The Kōmatis replied much in the same manner as Kusuma Srēshti and his friends did to the ministers of Vishnu Vardhana in the Kanyaka Purāna. Their answer will be found in canto VII, 223, of the Markandēya Purāna, which contains the earliest authentic literary reference to the name Kōmati. In effect they said "Thou art the ruler of the whole of this universe, Oh! King; we are but poor Kōmatis living by service. Say, then, how can we contract such a marriage?" The king was further dissuaded by his father and the Brāhmans. But all to no purpose. He carried off the girl, and married her in the rākshasa form (by forcible abduction), and, in consequence, in accordance with the law of Manu, became a Kōmati. He then performed penance, and again became a Kshatriya. It would seem that this episode, which is not found in the

Sanskrit Markandēya Purāna, is undoubtedly based on the incident recorded in the Kanyaka Purāna.

There remain only three arguments to adduce in support of the suggestion that the chief event narrated in the Kanyaka Purāna is worthy of credence. In the marriage ceremonies as performed by the Kōmatis, some prominence is given to certain of the incidents alleged to have taken place in setting at naught the demands of king Vishnu Vardhana. Such, for instance, is the respect shown to the bāla nagaram boys, which is referred to later on. Secondly, there are certain castes which beg only from Kōmatis, in return for services rendered during this critical period of their history. These are the Mailāris and Vīramushtis. The former still carry round the villages an image of Kanyakamma, sing her story, and beg alms of devotees. The Vīramushtis are wrestlers, who, by acrobatic performances, delayed, by previous arrangement, the second advance of Vishnu Vardhana, before the Kōmatis committed themselves to the flames. Allied to these castes are the Bukka Kōmatis. Originally, it is explained, the Bukkas belonged to the Kōmati caste. When Kanyakamma threw herself into the fire-pit, they, instead of following her example, presented bukka powder, saffron, and kunkumum prepared by them to her. She directed that they should live apart from the faithful Kōmatis, and live by selling the articles which they offered to her. The Kalinga Kōmatis also have a beggar caste attached to them, called Jakkali-vāndlu, who have nothing to do with the Gavara Kōmati beggar castes. Thirdly, if we may place any faith in the stories told by other castes, *e.g.*, the Jains of South Arcot, the Tottiyans, Kāppiliyans, and Bēri Chettis, the persecution of their subjects by their kings, in the manner indicated in the Kanyaka

Purāna, seems to have been widely practiced all over the country. And the method adopted by the Kōmatis to evade the king, and maintain the mēnarikam rule, has its counterpart in the popular ballad known as Lakshmammapata, still sung all over the Northern Circars, which gives a graphic description of the murder of his wife by a husband, who would not agree to giving their daughter away from his own sister's son. Even now, the sentiment on this subject is so strong that a man who goes against the rule of mēnarikam, not only among the Kōmatis, but among all castes observing it, is looked down on. It is usually described as bending the twig from its natural course, and, as the twig would waste away and die in consequence, so would parties to such marriages not prosper. In 1839, according to the Asiatic Journal, a case was taken before the Supreme Court of Madras, in which the plaintiff brought an action against his uncle for giving his daughter away in marriage, without making him an offer of her hand. The Judges were anxious that the matter should be settled out of Court, but the parties disagreed so entirely that nothing less than a public trial would satisfy them. It has not been possible to trace the decision of the Court.

The Kōmatis have for a long time been alleged to be connected with the Mādigas in a variety of ways. "The Kōmatis," Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes, "do not as a rule deny the fact of this connection. The Mādigas are, indeed, apparently under the protection of the Kōmatis, apply to them for help when in trouble, and obtain loans and other assistance. Some Kōmatis explain the connection with the Mādigas by a story that either Vishnu Vardhana, or his successor Rājarāja Narēndra persecuted the Kōmatis, and that they had to fly for refuge to the Mādigas. The Mādigas took them

in, and hid them, and they say that the present favour shown to that caste is only in gratitude for the kindness shown to themselves in the past. The Kōmatis themselves do not admit the title Mid-day Mādigas (applied to them by other castes), but explain it by a story that long ago a Kōmati killed and ate a cow-buffalo, which was really no cow-buffalo, but the wife of a great sage who had transformed her into that shape in order that she might be safe when he was in contemplation. The saint accordingly cursed the caste, and said that they should be Mid-day Mādigas for ever more." It is possible that the connection between the Kōmatis and Mādigas was originally such as that of the Kammālans, Ambattans, and other castes, with Paraiyans, Vettiyans, and other depressed classes, and that, in later times, weird stories were invented by fertile brains to explain them away. One of these undoubtedly is that which makes the Kōmatis the descendants of the issue of a plain Brāhman and a handsome Mādiga woman. It is said that their children managed a sweetmeat bazar, which the Brāhman kept in a much frequented forest, and, in his absence, pointed with a stick (kōl) to the plates, and thereby told their prices, without polluting the articles with the touch. Hence arose the name Kōlmutti (those who pointed with the stick), which became softened down to Kōmutti. Another story runs to the effect that the Mādiga woman, when she was pregnant with her first child, was gored by a cow, and gave birth to it in the cow-shed. Hence arises the name Gō-mutti, or cow-gored. In days gone by, it was incumbent on the Kōmatis to bear the marriage expenses of the Mādiga families attached to their village, much in the same way that the Chakkiliyan is treated in the Madura district by the Tottiyan caste in return

for the services he renders when a Tottiyan girl is under pollution on reaching maturity. In later times, this custom dwindled in some places * to the payment of the expenses of the marriage of two Mādigas, and even this was abandoned in favour of inviting the Mādigas to their weddings. In the city of Madras, it would appear to have been customary, in the eighteenth century, for the Kōmatis to get the māngalyam or sathamānam (marriage badge) blessed by an aged Mādiga before it was tied on the bride's neck. Further, it would appear to have then been customary to give the sacred fire, used at marriages for the performance of hōmam, to a Mādiga, and receive it back from him.

These, and similar customs, traces of which still exist in some places (*e.g.*, North Arcot), show that the Mādiga has some claim on the Kōmatis. What that claim is is not clear. However, it is reported that, if the Mādiga is not satisfied, he can effectually put a stop to a marriage by coming to the house at which it is to be celebrated, chopping away the plantain trunks which decorate the marriage booth, and carrying them off. Similarly, Kammālans invite Vettiyāns (or Paraiyans) to their marriage, and, if this is not done, there is the same right to cut down the plantain trunks. It would seem that the right thus exercised has reference to the right to the soil on which the booth stands. The cutting away of the plantain shows that their right to stand there is not recognised. The invitation to the Mādiga or Vettiyān would thus refer to the recognition by the Kōmatis and Kammālans to the lordship of the soil held in bygone days by these now depressed castes. Writing in 1869 and 1879, respectively, Sir Walter Elliot and

* Rev. J. Cain, Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

Major J. S. F. Mackenzie of the Mysore Commission refer * to the presentation of betel and nuts by the Kōmatis to the Mādigas, thereby inviting them to be present at their marriages. Dr. G. Oppert also refers to the same custom.† Having risen in the social scale, the Kōmatis would naturally wish to give this invitation covertly. Major Mackenzie says that the Kōmatis in Mysore, in order to covertly invite the Mādigas to the wedding, went to the back of their houses at a time when they were not likely to be seen, and whispered into an iron vessel, such as is commonly used for measuring grain, an invitation in the following words:—" In the house of the small ones (*i.e.*, Kōmatis) a marriage is going to take place. The members of the big house (*i.e.*, Mādigas) are to come." The Mādigas look on such a secret invitation as an insult, and would, if they saw the inviters, handle them roughly. It is noted, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, that " now-a-days the presentation (of betel leaf and nuts) is sometimes veiled by the Kōmati concerned sending his shoes to be mended by the Mādiga a few days before the wedding, deferring payment till the wedding day, and then handing the Mādiga the leaf and nut with the amount of his bill." According to another account, the Kōmati of set purpose unbinds the toe-ring of his native shoes (chērupu), and summons the Mādiga, whose function it is to make and repair these articles of attire. The Mādiga quietly accepts the job, and is paid more amply than is perhaps necessary in the shape of pān-supāri, flowers, and money. On the acceptance by the Mādiga of the betel and nuts, the Kōmati asks " Chērinda, chērinda" ? *i.e.*, has it reached you, and the Mādiga replies " Chērindi, chērindi", *i.e.*, it has reached.

---

* Trans. Ethnolog. Soc., London, 1869; Ind. Ant., VIII, 1879.

† Original Inhabitants of Bhārathavarsha.

Until he replies thus, the māngalyam cannot, it is said, be tied on the bride's neck. In the Bellary district, betel leaf and nuts are usually left at night behind the Mādiga's house, in token of the invitation to the wedding. In the Godāvari district, according to Mr. Hemingway, the Kōmati gives an order for a Mādiga for palmyra leaf baskets before the marriage, and presents him with betel and nut when he brings the baskets. Still another account says that some of the Kōmatis, just before a marriage, leave in the backyard of Mādiga houses a few pice and betel close to the cattle-pen, and that it is whispered that some Kōmatis use chuckler's (leather-worker's) tools, made in silver, for worship. It is also reported that chuckler's work is pretended to be gone through by some Kōmatis, after the completion of the marriage ceremonies, in the backyard of the house at dead of night, in the presence of caste-people only, and by preference under a dānimma chettu (*Punica Granatum*: pomegranate). This is known as kulāchāram, kuladharmam, or gōtra pūja (custom of the caste, or worship of the gōtras). The figure of a cow is made of flour, and into its stomach they put a mixture of turmeric, lime, and water, called wōkali. This, it has been suggested, is meant to represent blood. After the cow has been worshipped in due form, it is cut up with instruments made of flour, and intended to represent those used by cobblers. To each family is secretly sent that portion of the cow, which, according to custom, they are entitled to receive. Thus, the Kommala-vāru receive the horns, the Gontula the neck, the Karakapāla the hands and temples, the Thonti the hump, the Danta the teeth, the Veligollu the white nails, and so on. Major Mackenzie testified to the performance of this ceremony by the caste in Mysore in 1879, and it is recorded from

different parts of the Madras Presidency. The flour, which is thus distributed, is known as nēpāsāni mudda or nēpāsāni unta. The ceremony is still performed in the city of Madras, on the night of the fifth day if the marriage lasts over seven days, or on the night of the third day if it lasts over five days. If the wedding ceremonies are completed in one day, the ceremony is performed even during the day time. The following details are performed. A brass vessel (kalasam) and a cocoanut are set up in the house, and the bride and bridegroom's parties arrange themselves on each side of it. The vessel is decorated, and the cocoanut is made to represent the face of a woman, with eyes, nose, mouth, etc., and adorned with jewelry, flowers, anilin and turmeric powder marks. A young man of the bridegroom's party worships the feet of all present. The flour cow is then made, cut up, and distributed. Cocoanuts are broken, and camphor is set on fire, and waved before the vessel. Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim states that families are known by the names of the various organs of the cow in the Godāvari district. There is, he says, a story to the effect that some Kōmatis killed a cow-buffalo, which went about as such by day, but became transformed into a beautiful woman under the miraculous influence of a pious Brāhman. As a redemption for their sin, these Kōmatis were ordered by the Brāhman to take their names after the various parts of the animal, and as, by killing the animal, they proved worse than Mādigas, they were ordered to show respect to these people. In the Kumbum tāluk of the Kurnool district, a flour buffalo is substituted for the cow. In the Markapūr tāluk of the same district, two elephants are made of mud, and the bride and bridegroom sit beside them. Presentations of cloths and jewels are then made to them. The officiating

purōhit (priest) worships the elephants, and the bride and bridegroom go round them.

Two further points of connection between the Kōmatis and Mādigas are referred to by Major Mackenzie. "I find," he writes, "that it is the custom to obtain the fire for burning Kāma, the Indian Cupid, at the end of the Hōli feast from a Mādiga's house. The Mādigas do not object to giving the fire, in fact they are paid for it." This appears to be a purely local custom, and no trace of its existence has been found in various parts of the Madras Presidency. The other point refers to the identification of the goddess Mātangi of the Mādigas with the Kōmati goddess Kanyaka Amma. "I cannot," Major Mackenzie writes, "discover the connection between two such different castes as the Kōmatis and Mādigas, who belong to different divisions. The Kōmatis belong to the 10 pana division, while the Mādigas are members of the 9 pana.* One reason has been suggested. The caste goddess of the Kōmatis is the virgin Kannika Amma, who destroyed herself rather than marry a prince, because he was of another caste. She is usually represented by a vessel full of water, and, before the marriage ceremonies are commenced, she is brought in state from the temple, and placed in the seat of honour in the house. The Mādigas claim Kannika as their goddess, worship her under the name of Mātangi and object to the Kōmatis taking their goddess." The Kōmatis stoutly deny that there is any connection between Mātangi and Kanyaka Amma, and it would seem that they are independent goddesses.

Marriage is always infant. A Brāhman purōhit officiates. Each purōhit has a number of houses attached

* The panas have reference to the division of South Indian castes into the right- and left-hand factions.

to his circle, and his sons usually divide the circle among themselves on partition, like any other property. Polygamy is permitted, but only if the first wife produces no offspring. The taking of a second wife is assented to by the first wife, who, in some cases, believes that, as the result of the second marriage, she herself will beget children. Two forms of marriage ceremonial are recognised, one called purānōktha, according to long established custom, and the other called vēdōktha, which follows the Vēdic ritual of Brāhmans. In Madras, on the first day of a marriage, the contracting couple have an oil bath, and the bridegroom goes through the upanayana (sacred thread investiture) ceremony. He then pretends to go off to Kāsi (Benares), and is met by the bride's party, who take him to the bride's house, where the māngalyam is tied by the bridegroom before the hōmam (sacrificial fire). On the second day, hōmam is continued, and a caste dinner is given. On the third day, the gōtra pūja is performed. On the fourth day, hōmam is repeated, and, on the following day, the pair are seated on a swing, and rocked to and fro. Presents, called katnam, are made to the bridegroom, but no vōli (bride-price) is paid. In the mofussil,* where the purānōktha form of ceremonial is more common, ancestors are invoked on the first day. On the second day, the ashtavarga is observed, and the bride and bridegroom worship eight of the principal gods of the Hindu Pantheon. On this day, the pandal (marriage booth) is erected. On the third day, the māngalyam is tied, sometimes by the officiating Brāhman purōhit, and sometimes by the bridegroom. On the fourth day, the Brāhmans of the place are honoured, and, on the following

* The mofussil indicates up-country stations and districts, as contra-distinguished from the "Presidency" (Madras City).

day, in most places, a festival is held in honour of the goddess Kanyaka Paramēswari. The bride and bridegroom's mothers go to a tank (pond) or river with copper vessels, and bring back water at the head of a procession. The vessels are placed in a special pandal, and worshipped with flowers, anilin and turmeric powders. Finally, cocoanuts are broken before them. On the next day, or on the same day if the marriage ceremonies conclude thereon, the festival in honour of the Bālanagaram boys, or those who helped the Kōmatis of Penugonda in their trouble with Vishnu Vardhana, is held. Five boys and girls are bathed, decked with jewelry, and taken in procession to the local temple, whence they are conducted to the bride's house, where they are fed. On the following day, the ceremony called thotlu pūja is performed. A doll is placed in a cradle connected with two poles, and rocked to and fro. The bridegroom gives the doll into the hands of the bride, saying that he has to go on a commercial trip. The bride hands it back to him, with the remark that she has to attend to her kitchen work. On the following day, the bridal couple are taken in procession, and, in the Bellary district, a further day is devoted to the surgi ceremony. The bride and bridegroom bathe together, go to the local temple, and return. Then five girls bathe, the five posts of the marriage pandal are worshipped, and the kankanams (wrist-threads) are removed from the wrists of the newly-married couple.

Kalinga Kōmatis, who live in the northern part of Ganjam, and have forgotten their mother-tongue, have practically adopted the Oriya customs, as they have to depend mainly on Oriya Brāhmans. At their marriages, however, they use the Telugu bottu or sathamānam.

Widow remarriage is not permitted among any sections of the caste, which is very strict in the observance of this rule. Except among the Saivites, a widow is not compelled to have her head shaved, or give up wearing jewelry, or the use of betel. In the south of the Madras Presidency, if a little girl becomes a widow, her māngalyam is not removed, and her head is not shaved till she reaches maturity. Vaishnava widows always retain their hair.

Concerning a form of marriage between the living and the dead, performed by members of this caste if a man and woman have been living together, and the man dies, Mr. Hutchinson writes as follows.* "The sad intelligence of her man's death is communicated to her neighbours, a guru or priest is summoned, and the ceremony takes place. According to a writer who once witnessed such a proceeding, the dead body of the man was placed against the outer wall of the verandah of the house in a sitting posture, attired like a bridegroom, and the face and hands besmeared with turmeric. The woman was clothed like a bride, and adorned with the usual tinsel ornament over the face, which, as well as the arms, was daubed over with yellow. She sat opposite the dead body, and spoke to it in light unmeaning words, and then chewed bits of dry cocoanuts, and squirted them on the face of the dead man. This continued for hours, and not till near sunset was the ceremony brought to a close. Then the head of the corpse was bathed, and covered with a cloth of silk, the face rubbed over with some red powder, and betel leaves placed in the mouth. Now she might consider herself married, and the funeral procession started." This refers to

* Marriage Customs in Many Lands, 1897.

the Vīra Saiva or Lingāyat Kōmatis of the Northern Circars.

In the Northern Circars, and part of the Ceded Districts, the Vēdōktha form of marriage now prevails, and its usage is spreading into the southern districts of Mysore. Further, the Kōmatis perform most of their ceremonies in the same form. This, it is contended, is a latter day development by some of the more conservative members of the caste, but it is stated by those who follow it that it is allowed to them by the Hindu sāstras (law books), as they are Vaisyas. During recent years, the latter view has obtained a great impetus through the writings and influence of several of the more prominent members of the caste, between whom and their opponents a war of pamphlets has taken place. It is not possible here to go into details of the dispute, but the main point seems to be as follows. On the one hand, it is denied that there are any true Vaisyas in the Kaliyuga (iron age). And so, though the Kōmatis are accorded the status of Vaisyas in recognition of their being traders, yet they cannot follow the Vēdic form of ceremonial, which is the exclusive right of Brāhmans; and, even if they ever followed it, they forfeited it after the break-up of the caste on the death of Kanyakamma. On the other hand, it is stated that the Kōmatis are Dwijas (twice born), and that they are consequently entitled to follow the Vēdic ritual, and that those who forfeited the Vēdic rights are those who did not follow Kanyakamma to the fire-pits, and do not therefore belong to the 102 gōtras. The dispute is an old standing one, and nearly a century ago was taken for adjudication as far as the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The question whether the Kōmatis are entitled to perform their subah and asubah (auspicious, like marriage, and inauspicious,

like death) ceremonies according to the Vēdic form, was raised by the Brāhmans of Masulipatam in 1817, and adjudicated upon.* Disputes had occurred between the Brāhmans and Kōmatis for a long time, and disturbances constantly took place. The Magistrate of Masulipatam prohibited the Kōmatis from performing one of the ceremonies, until they had established their right to do so in a Civil Court. The appellants thereon sued the defendants in damages for impediments made against their attending to the rites prescribed by the Vēdas, and prayed for permission to perform them in conformity with the Vēdas. The defendants denied the right of the Kōmatis to perform, and the fact of their ever having performed the ceremonies appointed by the Vēdas. They admitted the intervention of the Magistrate, and stated that "upwards of two thousand years ago, the Kōmatis adopted the customs of the Soodra caste, and some of them became Byri Kōmatis, and Bookha caste people, etc. The rest of them, amounting to a hundred and two gōtras, fabricated false gōtrams for themselves, and called themselves Nagaram Kōmatis. They fabricated a book called Canniaca Purānam, named the Bashcara Puntulu Varu their priest, conformed to that book, performed the sign of the upanayana ceremony in a loose manner, and in the language of the Purānas; at the time of marriage, made marriage ceremony in seven days contrary to the custom of all castes whatever, erected prōlu posts, made lumps of dough with flour, and got the same divided among them according to their spurious gōtrams, at midnight fetched the pot of water called arivany, and observed the ceremonies for ten days on the occurrence of a birth, and fifteen days on

* Moore. Indian Appeal Cases, Vol. III, 359—82.

the occurrence of a death. In this manner, the forefathers of the plaintiffs, the other merchants, and the plaintiffs themselves, had got all ceremonies conducted for upwards of two thousand years past." They cited instances, in which the plaintiffs, or some of them, had failed in previous attempts to sustain the right now claimed, and objected to the form of the plaint as not sufficiently setting forth the particulars and nature of the obstruction for which the plaintiffs claimed compensation. The plaintiffs, in their reply, did not negative or rebut the specific statements of the defendants, but insisted generally on their right to the performance of the ceremonies in question. The point at issue being not clear from the pleadings, the parties were questioned in open Court as to the precise object of the action, and the ground on which it was maintained. The plaintiffs stated that their object was the establishment of their right to have the whole of the subha and asubha ceremonies performed in their houses by Brāhmans in the language of the Vēdas, and that they claimed this right on the ground of the Sāstras. On this, the Zilla Judge framed a hypothetical statement of facts and law based on the defendant's answer for the opinion of the Pandit of the Court, and, upon his opinion, declared the plaintiffs entitled to have the ceremonies performed for them by Brāhmans. Upon appeal, the Provincial Court for the northern division remitted the suit to the Zilla Court to take evidence, and, upon such opinions of the Pandits which the Provincial Court took upon the same statement as the Zilla, they affirmed the decree, but without costs. The Pandits consulted by them were those of the Provincial Courts of the northern, centre, southern and western divisions. They all agreed that " the Brāhmans ought not to perform the ceremonies in the language of

the Vādas for the Vaisyas." Three of them further added that, in their opinion, the Judges ought to pass a decision, awarding that the Kōmatis are to continue to perform religious rites according to the rules laid down in the book called Purānam (*i.e.*, in the Purānōktha form), as are at present observed by the corrupt or degenerate Vaisyas or Kōmatis and others. On appeal, the Sudder Dewāni Adawlut reversed the decisions of the lower Courts, "having maturely weighed the evidence produced, and considered the unbiassed and concurring opinions of the four law officers of the Provincial Courts." On further appeal to the Privy Council, Lord Brougham, in delivering judgment, observed that "the plaintiffs, not having, in their opinion, alleged any case of injury done to them by the defendants upon which they were entitled to go into evidence, and not having therefore established any case for damages in their suit against the defendants, no question remained but of a mere declaration of a right to perform certain religious ceremonies; that, if the Courts had jurisdiction to proceed to the determination of that question in this suit (upon which their Lordships guard themselves in their judgment), the plaintiffs have not produced sufficient evidence to establish such a right; that, under these circumstances, all the decrees therefore ought to be reversed, and the plaint dismissed (the reversal of the Sudder Court amounts in fact to a dismissal of the plaint); but it is not, as it ought to be, a dismissal without costs; and that this decision should be without prejudice to the existence or non-existence of the right claimed by the appellants, in any other suit, in which such a question may be properly raised."

The Kōmatis wear the sacred thread, and utter the Gāyatri and other sacred mantras. A number of them,

at Adōni in the Bellary district, refused to be measured by me in the afternoon, as they would not have time to bathe, and remove the pollution by evening. In Telugu dictionaries, the Kōmatis are given the alternative names of Mūdava Kolamuvāru (those of the third caste), Vaisyalu, and Nallanayya Todabiddalu (those who were begotten from the thighs of Vishnu). As already stated, there are among the Kōmatis ordinary Saivites, who daub themselves with ashes; Lingāyats or Vīra Saivas, who wear the linga in a silver casket; Rāmānuja Vaishnavites; Chaitanya Vaishnavas, who are confined to the Kalinga section; and Mādhvas, who put on the sect marks of Mādhva Brāhmans. The Traivarnikas are a special class among the Vaishnavas. They imitate the Vaishnava Brāhmans more closely than the rest. They, and their females, tie their cloths like Brāhmans, and the men shave moustaches. Unlike the Saivites and Lingāyats, they eat flesh and fish, and drink spirituous liquors. They will eat in the houses of Sātānis, whereas other Kōmatis do not eat in any but Brāhman houses. But it may be observed that Velamas, Balijas, Kammālans, Ambattans, Vannāns, and many other castes, will take neither water nor food from Kōmatis. This, however, does not prevent them from purchasing the cakes prepared in ghī or oil, which the Kōmatis sell in petty shops.

Writing early in the nineteenth century, Buchanan refers * to a dispute at Gubbi in the Mysore State between the Kōmatis and Banajigas, which arose from the former building a temple to their goddess Kanyakamma. Purnia, the Prime-minister, divided the town by a wall, thus separating the two parties. The Kōmatis

* Journey through Mysore, Canara and Malabar.

claimed that it had been the custom for all parties to live together, and that it would be an infringement of the rules of caste for them to be forced into a separate quarter. The chief of the Kōmatis entered the town in procession, on horseback with an umbrella held over his head. This assumption of rank was regarded by the Banajigas with the utmost indignation. To such a pitch did the quarrel reach that, at the time of Buchanan's visit, there was a rumour current as to the necessity of killing a jack-ass in the street, which would cause the immediate desolation of the place. "There is," he writes, "not a Hindu in Karnata, that would remain another night in it, unless by compulsion. Even the adversaries of the party would think themselves bound in honour to fly. This singular custom seems to be one of the resources upon which the natives have fallen to resist arbitrary oppression, and may be had recourse to whenever the Government infringes, or is considered to have infringed upon the custom of any caste. It is of no avail against any other kind of oppression."

A brief reference may be made to the part which the Kōmatis took, in bygone days, in the faction fights known as right and left-hand caste disputes. Some of the South Indian castes, including the Kōmatis, belong to the former, and others to the latter. Those belonging to the left-hand would not let those belonging to the right-hand pass through their streets with their marriage and other processions. The right-hand section was equally jealous of the left. The Kōmatis, who were among the early settlers in the town of Madras in the seventeenth century, were involved in faction disputes on two recorded occasions, once, in 1652 A.D., during the Governorship of Aaron Baker, and later on during that

of William Pitt,* in 1707. When a wedding procession of members of one section passed through the streets of the other section, Pitt summoned twelve of the heads of each section, and locked them up in a room together, until the dispute should be adjusted. An agreement was speedily arrived at, according to which the right-hand settled on the west side of the town, now known as Pedda Naikan Pettah, and the left-hand on the east side, in what is at present called Mutialu Pettah. The Kōmatis accordingly are now mainly found in the western part of the city of Madras.

All over the country, the Kōmatis venerate the deified virgin Kannika Paramēswari, to whom, in most places, they have erected temples. One of these, at Tadpatri in the Anantapūr district, which was in course of construction in 1904, is of more than ordinary interest. It was being built at the expense of the local Kōmatis, who had raised a subscription among themselves for the purpose. The design was original, and even arches entered into its construction. The sculpture, with which it is decorated, is quite excellent in design and finish. Much of it is copied from the two beautiful temples, which have existed at the place since the days of the Vijianagar dynasty. Other notable temples are those at Penukonda, Vizianagram in Vizagapatam, and Berhampur in Ganjam. Fines collected from erring castemen in the Godāvari, Guntūr and Kistna districts, are still sent to the temple at Penukonda. The Kōmatis worship various goddesses, in addition to Kanyaka Paramēswari. Those who live in Vizagapatam "relax their faith in favour of the celebrated Muhammadan saint, who lies buried by the Durga on the top of the hill which overlooks

---

* *See* Talboys Wheeler, Madras in the Olden Time, II, 49—89.

the harbour. Every vessel, passing the harbour inwards and outwards, salutes him by hoisting and lowering its flag three times. He is considered all potent over the elements in the Bay of Bengal, and many a silver dhoney (boat) is presented at his shrine by Hindu ship-owners after a successful voyage. We remember a suit between a Kōmati, the owner of a dhoney, and his Muhammadan captain, who was also the super-cargo, for settlement of accounts. In a storm off the coast of Arakan, the skipper stated that he had vowed a mudupu or purse of rupees to the Durga, and had duly presented it on his return. This sum, among other sets-off, he charged to the owner of the vessel, the plaintiff, whose sole contention was that the vow had never been discharged; the propriety of conciliating the old Fakir in a hurricane he submissively allowed." Even now, the Kōmatis, though no longer boat-owners, revere the saint, and make vows to him for the success of civil suits, and recovery from all sorts of maladies.

The Kōmatis employ Brāhmans for the performance of their ceremonial rites, and recognise a Brāhman as their guru. He is commonly called Bhāskarāchārya, after the individual of that name who lived at Penukonda prior to the sixteenth century A.D., and translated the Sanskrit Kanyaka Purāna into a Telugu poem. He made certain regulations for the daily conduct of the Kōmatis, and made the 102 gōtras submit to them. A copy of an inscription on a copper plate, in the possession of one Kotta Appaya, the Archaka or priest of the Nagarēswaraswāmi temple at Penukonda, is given in the Mackenzie manuscripts. It records a grant (of unknown date) to Bhāskarāchārya, the guru of the Vaisyas, by the 102 gōtrams, according to which each family agreed for ever afterwards to give half a rupee for every marriage,

and a quarter of a rupee for each year. Such doles are common even at the present day to his successors. These, like the original Bhāskarāchārya, who is considered to be an incarnation of Brahma, are house-holders, and not Sanyāsis (religious ascetics). There are several of them, in different parts of the country, one for example being at Penukonda, and another near Hospet, who makes periodical tours in state, with drums, silver maces, and belted peons, and is received with every mark of respect. He settles disputes, levies fines, and collects subscriptions towards the upkeep of his mutt (religious institution), which is also supported by inām (rent-free) lands.

The Kōmati dead, except children and Lingāyats, are cremated. Lingāyat Kōmatis, like other Lingāyats, bury their dead in a sitting posture. The death ceremonies among the Gavaras closely resemble those of Brāhmans. The period of death pollution is sixteen days, during which sweets are taboo.

The Kōmatis are best known as merchants, grocers, and money-lenders. In the city of Madras, they are the principal vendors of all sorts of imported articles. The row of shops in the China bazar, between Pachaiyappa's College and Popham's Broadway, is almost entirely maintained by them. Many Kōmatis are cloth merchants, and Traivarnikas are almost entirely engaged in the glassware trade. In the Northern Circars, some earn a living as petty dealers in opium and ganja (Indian hemp). In the Ganjam, Vizagapatam and Godāvari districts they are found in the hills, acting as middle-men between the hill tribes and the people of the plains. Most of the Kōmatis are literate, and this helps them in their dealings with their constituents. They are proverbially shrewd, industrious, and thrifty, and are often rich.

If a Kōmati fails in business, his compatriots will come to his rescue, and give him a fresh start. Organised charity is well known among them. Each temple of Kanyaka Paramēswari is a centre for charity. In the city of Madras the Kanyaka Paramēswari charities, among other good objects, promote the development of female education. In 1905, the Kōmatis established a Southern India Vysia Association, with the object of encouraging "the intellectual, moral, religious, social, industrial and commercial advancement of the Vysia community." Among the means employed for so doing, are the helping of deserving students with scholarships for the prosecution of the study of the English and vernacular languages, and organised relief of poor and distressed members of the community by founding orphanages, and so forth. The affairs of the association are managed by an executive committee made up of prominent members of the caste, including merchants, lawyers, and contractors.

Many stories and proverbs have reference to the wealth, ready wit, thrift, and other qualities of the Kōmatis.* Of these, the following are selected from a large repertoire :—

The Blind Kōmati and Vishnu.

A blind Kōmati prayed to Vishnu for the restoration of his eyesight, and at last the god appeared before him, and asked him what he wanted. "Oh! God," he replied, "I want to see from above the seventh storey of my mansion my great-grandsons playing in the streets, and eating their cakes from golden vessels."

Vishnu was so astonished at the request of the blind man, which combined riches, issue, and the restoration

* *See* Tales of Kōmati Wit and Wisdom. C. Hayavadana Rao, Madras, 1907.

of his eyesight in one demand, that he granted all his desires.

The Kōmati and the Thief.

An old Kōmati observed a thief at dead of night lurking under a pomegranate tree, and cried out to his wife to bring him a low stool. On this he seated himself in front of the thief, and bawled out for hot water, which his wife brought him. Pretending that he was suffering from severe tooth-ache, he gargled the water, and spat it out continuously at the wondering thief. This went on till daybreak, when he called out his neighbours, who captured the thief, and handed him over to the police.

The Kōmati and his Cakes.

A Kōmati was on his way to the weekly market, with his plate of cakes to sell there. A couple of thieves met him when he was half way there, and, after giving him a severe thrashing, walked off with the cakes. The discomfited Kōmati, on his way back home with the empty plate, was met by another Kōmati going to market with his cakes. The latter asked how the demand for cakes was at the market, and the former replied "Why go to the market, when half-way people come and demand your cakes?" and passed on. The unsuspecting Kōmati went on, and, like the other, was the recipient of a sound thrashing at the hands of the thieves.

The Kōmati and the Scorpion.

A number of Kōmatis went one day to a temple. One of them put one of his fingers into the navel of the image of Vināyakan (the elephant god) at the gateway, when a scorpion, which was inside it, stung him. Putting his finger to his nose, the Kōmati remarked "What

a fine smell! I have never experienced the like." This induced another man to put his finger in, and he too was stung, and made similar pretence. All of them were thus stung in succession, and then consoled each other.

The Kōmati and the Milk Tax.

Once upon a time, a great king levied a tax upon milk, and all his subjects were sorely tried by it. The Kōmatis, who kept cows, found the tax specially inconvenient. They, therefore, bribed the minister, and mustered in strength before the king, to whom they spoke concerning the oppressive nature of the tax. The king asked what their profit from the milk was. "A pie for a pie" said they to a man, and the king, thinking that persons who profit only a pie ought not to be troubled, forthwith passed orders for the abolition of the tax.

The Kōmati and the Pāndyan King.

Once upon a time, a Pāndyan King had a silver vessel of enormous size made for the use of the palace, and superstitiously believed that its first contents should not be of an ordinary kind. So he ordered his minister to publish abroad that all his subjects were to put into the vessel a chembu-full of milk from each house. The frugal Kōmatis, hearing of this, thought, each to himself, that, as the king had ordered such a large quantity, and others would bring milk, it would suffice if they took a chembu-full of water, as a little water poured into such a large quantity of milk would not change its colour, and it would not be known that they only contributed water. All the Kōmatis accordingly each brought a chembu-full of water, and none of them told the others of the trick he was about to play. But it so happened that the Kōmatis were the first to enter the palace, while they

thought that the people of other castes had come and gone. The vessel was placed behind a screen, so that no one might cast the evil eye on it, and the Kōmatis were let in one by one. This they did in all haste, and left with great joy at the success of their trick. Thus there was nothing but water in the vessel. Now it had been arranged that the king was to be the first person to see the contents of his new vessel, and he was thunder-struck to find that it contained only water. He ordered his minister to punish the Kōmatis severely. But the ready-witted Kōmatis came forward, and said "Oh! gracious King, appease thy anger, and kindly listen to what we have to say. We each brought a chembu-full of water, to find out how much the precious vessel will hold. Now that we have taken the measurement, we will forthwith fetch the quantity of milk required." The king was exceedingly pleased, and sent them away.

A story is told to the effect that, when a Kōmati was asked to identify a horse about which a Muhammadan and Hindu were quarrelling, he said that the fore-part looked like the Muhammadan's, and the hind-part like the Hindu's. Another story is told of a Kōmati, who when asked by a Judge what he knew about a fight between two men, deposed that he saw them standing in front of each other and speaking in angry tones when a dust-storm arose. He shut his eyes, and the sound of blows reached his ears, but he could not say which of the men beat the other.

Of proverbs relating to the Kōmatis, the following may be noted:—

A Brāhman will learn if he suffers, and a Kōmati will learn if he is ruined.

If I ask whether you have salt, you say that you have dhol (a kind of pulse).

Like the burning of a Kōmati's house, which would mean a heavy loss.

When two Kōmatis whisper on the other side of the lake, you will hear them on this side. This has reference to the harsh voice of the Kōmatis. In native theatricals, the Kōmati is a general favourite with the audience, and he is usually represented as short of stature, obese, and with a raucous voice.

The Kōmati that suits the stake. This has reference to a story in which a Kōmati's stoutness, brought on by want of exercise and sedentary habits, is said to have shown that he was the proper person to be impaled on a stake. According to the Rev. H. Jensen,* the proverb refers to an incident that took place in 'the city of injustice.' A certain man was to be impaled for a crime, but, at the last moment he pointed out that a certain fat merchant (Kōmati) would be better suited for the instrument of punishment, and so escaped. The proverb is now used of a person who is forced to suffer for the faults of others.

The Kōmatis are satirically named Dhaniyāla jāti, or coriander caste, because, as the coriander seed has to be crushed before it is sown, so the Kōmati is supposed to come to terms only by rough treatment.

The Kōmatis have the title Setti or Chetti, which is said to be a contracted form of Srēshti, meaning a precious person. In recent times, some of them have assumed the title Ayya.

Kombara.—The name, meaning a cap made of the spathe of the areca palm (*Areca Catechu*) of an exogamous sept of Kelasi. Such caps are worn by various classes in South Canara, *e.g.*, the Holeyas and Koragas.

---

* Classified Collection of Tamil Proverbs, 1897. *See* also C. Hayavadana Rao, *op. cit.*, and Ind. Ant., XX, 78, 1891.

Kombu (stick).—An exogamous sept of Kuruba.

Komma.—Komma (a musical horn) or Kommula has been recorded as an exogamous sept of Kamma and Māla. Kommula is further a professional title for horn-blowers, mainly Māla, Mādiga, and Panisavan, who perform at festivals and funerals.

Kommi.—A gōtra of Gollas, the members of which may not use kommi fuel.

Kompala (houses).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga.

Kōnān.—Kōnān or Kōnār is a title of Idaiyans. Some Gollas call themselves Kōnānulu.

Kōnangi (buffoon).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga.

Konda (mountain).—An exogamous sept of Dēvānga and Mēdara, and a synonym for Konda Dora.

Konda Dora.—The Konda Doras are a caste of hill cultivators, found chiefly in Vizagapatam. Concerning them Surgeon-Major W. R. Cornish writes as follows.* "Contrasting strangely with the energetic, patriarchal, and land-reverencing Parja (Poroja), are the neighbouring indigenous tribes found along the slopes of the eastern ghauts. They are known as Konda Doras, Konda Kāpus, and Ojas. From what has been ascertained of their languages, it seems certain that, divested of the differences which have been engrafted upon them by the fact of the one being influenced by Uriya and the other by Telugu, they are substantially of the same origin as the Parja language and the Khond language. But the people themselves seem to have entirely lost all those rights to the soil, which are now characteristic of the more northern tribes. They are completely at the

* Madras Census Report, 1871.

mercy of late immigrants, so much so that, though they call themselves Konda Doras, they are called by the Bhaktas, their immediate superiors, Konda Kāpus. If they are found living in a village with no Telugu superior, they are known as Doras. If, on the other hand, such a man is at the head of the village affairs, they are to him as *adscripti glebæ*, and are denominated Kāpus or ryots (cultivators). It is apparent that the comparatively degraded position that this particular soil-folk holds is due to the influence of the Telugu colonists; and the reason why they have been subjected to a greater extent than the cognate tribes further inland is possibly that the Telugu colonization is of more ancient date than the Uriya colonization. It may further be surmised that, from the comparative proximity of the Telugu districts, the occupation of the crests of these ghāts partook rather of the character of a conquest than that of mere settlings in the land. But, however it came about, the result is most disastrous. Some parts of Pāchipenta, Hill Mādugulu, and Kondakambēru, which have been occupied by Telugu-speaking folk, are far inferior in agricultural prosperity to the inland parts, where the Uriyas have assumed the lead in the direction of affairs."

In the Census Report, 1891, Mr. H. A. Stuart writes that "these people all speak Telugu, and the majority of them have returned that as their parent-tongue. But a large number returned their caste name in the parent-tongue column. I have since received a vocabulary, which is said to be taken from the dialect of the Konda Doras; and, if this is correct, then the real speech of these people is a dialect of Khond." One Durgi Pātro, the head of a mutta (division of a Zemindari) informed Mr. G. F. Paddison that Konda Doras and Khonds are

identical. In the Census Report, 1901, Mr. W. Francis states that the Konda Doras "seem to be a section of the Khonds, which has largely taken to speaking Telugu, has adopted some of the Telugu customs, and is in the transitional stage between Animism and Hinduism. They call themselves Hindus, and worship the Pāndavas and a goddess called Talupulamma. They drink alcohol, and eat pork, mutton, etc., and will dine with Kāpus." At times of census, Pāndavakulam (or Pāndava caste) has been returned as a title of the Konda Doras.

For the following note I am indebted to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao. There are, among the Konda Doras, two well-defined divisions, called Pedda (big) and Chinna (little) Kondalu. Of these, the former have remained in their old semi-independent position, while the latter have come under Telugu domination. The Chinna Kondalu, who have been living in contact with the Bhaktha caste, have adopted the Telugu system of intipērulu, as exogamous septs, whereas the Pedda Kondalu have retained the totem divisions, which occur among other hill castes, *e.g.*, Nāga (cobra), Bhāg (tiger), and Kochchimo (tortoise). Among the Chinna Kondalu, the custom of mēnarikam, according to which a man marries his maternal uncle's daughter, is observed, and may further marry his own sister's daughter. The Chinna Kondalu women wear glass bangles and beads, like women of the plains. Men of the Chinna Kondalu section serve as bearers and Government employees, whereas those of the Pedda Kondalu section are engaged in cultivation. The former have personal names corresponding to those of the inhabitants of the plains, *e.g.*, Linganna, Gangamma, while the names of the latter are taken from the day of the week on which

they were born, *e.g.*, Bhudra (Wednesday), Sukra (Friday).

Among the Chinna Kondalu, a girl is married before or after puberty. When a marriage is decided on, the girl's parents receive a present (vōli) of four rupees and a female cloth. On an auspicious day fixed by the Chukkamusti (star-gazer), the bride is conducted to the home of the bridegroom. The contracting couple are bathed in turmeric-water, put on new cloths presented by their fathers-in-law, and wrist-threads are tied on their wrists. On the same day, or the following morning, at a time settled by the Chukkamusti, the bridegroom, under the direction of a caste elder, ties the sathamānam (marriage badge) on the bride's neck. On the following day, the wrist-threads are removed, and the newly married couple bathe.

Among the Pedda, as among the Chinna Kondalu, a girl is married before or after puberty. When a man contemplates taking a wife, his parents carry three pots of liquor to the home of the girl whose hand he seeks. The acceptance of these by her father is a sign that the match is agreeable to him, and a jholla tonka (bride-price) of five rupees is paid to him. The future bridegroom's party has to give three feasts to that of the bride-elect, for each of which a pig is killed. The girl is conducted to the house of the bridegroom, and, if she has reached puberty, remains there. Otherwise she returns home, and joins her husband later on, the occasion being celebrated by a further feast of pork.

Both sections allow the remarriage of widows. Among the Pedda Kondalu, a younger brother may marry the widow of his elder brother. By both sections divorce is permitted. Among the Chinna Kondalus, a man who marries a divorcée has to pay her first husband twenty-four

rupees, of which half is divided among the neighbouring caste villages in certain recognised proportions.

The dead are usually burnt by both sections. The Pedda Kondalu kill a pig on the third day, and hold a feast, at which much liquor is disposed of. By the Chinna Kondalu the chinna rōzu (little day) ceremony is observed, as it is by other castes dwelling in the plains.

The Chinna Kondalu bear the titles Anna or Ayya when they are merely cultivators under Bhaktha landlords, and Dora under other circumstances. The Pedda Kondalu usually have no title.

A riot took place, in 1900, at the village of Korravanivalasa in the Vizagapatam district, under the following strange circumstances. "A Konda Dora of this place, named Korra Mallayya, pretended that he was inspired, and gradually gathered round him a camp of four or five thousand people from various parts of the agency. At first his proceedings were harmless enough, but in April he gave out that he was a re-incarnation of one of the five Pāndava brothers; that his infant son was the god Krishna; that he would drive out the English and rule the country himself; and that, to effect this, he would arm his followers with bamboos, which should be turned by magic into guns, and would change the weapons of the authorities into water. Bamboos were cut, and rudely fashioned to resemble guns, and armed with these, the camp was drilled by the Swāmi (god), as Mallayya had come to be called. The assembly next sent word that they were going to loot Pāchipenta, and when, on the 1st May, two constables came to see how matters stood, the fanatics fell upon them, and beat them to death. The local police endeavoured to recover the bodies, but, owing to the threatening

attitude of the Swāmi's followers, had to abandon the attempt. The District Magistrate then went to the place in person, collected reserve police from Vizagapatam, Pārvatipur, and Jeypore, and at dawn on the 7th May rushed the camp to arrest the Swāmi and the other leaders of the movement. The police were resisted by the mob, and obliged to fire. Eleven of the rioters were killed, others wounded or arrested, and the rest dispersed. Sixty of them were tried for rioting, and three, including the Swāmi, for murdering the constables. Of the latter, the Swāmi died in jail, and the other two were hanged. The Swāmi's infant son, the god Krishna, also died, and all trouble ended at once and completely."

Concerning the Konda Kāpus or Konda Reddis of the Godāvari district, Mr. F. R. Hemingway writes as follows.* "The hill Reddis, or Konda Reddis, are a caste of jungle men, having some characteristics in common with the Kōyas. They usually talk a rough Telugu, clipping their words so that it is often difficult to understand them ; but it is said that some of them speak Kōya. They are of slighter build than the Kōyas, and their villages are even smaller. They will not eat in the house of a Kōya. They call themselves by various high-sounding titles, such as Pāndava Reddis, Rāja Reddis, and Reddis of the solar race (Sūryavamsa), and do not like the plain name of Konda Reddi. They recognize no endogamous sub-divisions, but have exogamous septs. In character they resemble the Kōyas, but are less simple and stupid, and in former years were much given to crime. They live by shifting cultivation. They do not touch beef, but will eat pork. They profess to be both Saivites and Vaishnavites, and occasionally employ

* Gazetteer of the Godāvari district.

Brāhman priests at their funerals; and yet they worship the Pāndavas, the spirits of the hills (or, as they call them, the sons of Rācha), their ancestors including women who have died before their husbands, and the deity Muthyālamma and her brother Pōturāzu, Sāralamma, and Unamalamma. The last three are found in nearly every village. Other deities are Doddiganga, who is the protector of cattle, and is worshipped when the herds are driven into the forests to graze, and Dēsaganga (or Paraganga), who takes the place of the Maridamma of the plains, and the Muthyālamma of the Kōyas as goddess of cholera and small-pox. The shrine of Sāralamma of Pedakonda, eight miles east of Rēkapalle, is a place of pilgrimage, and so is Bison Hill (Pāpikonda), where an important Reddi festival is held every seven or eight years in honour of the Pāndava brothers, and a huge fat pig, fattened for the occasion, is killed and eaten. The Reddis, like the Kōyas, also observe the harvest festivals. They are very superstitious, believing firmly in sorcery, and calling in wizards in time of illness. Their villages are formed into groups like those of the Kōyas, and the hereditary headmen over these are called by different names, such as Dora, Mūttadar, Varnapedda, and Kulapatradu. Headmen of villages are known as Pettadars. They recognise, though they do not frequently practice, marriage by capture. If a parent wishes to show his dislike for a match, he absents himself when the suitor's party calls, and sends a bundle of cold rice after them when they have departed. Children are buried. Vaishnavite Reddis burn their adult dead, while the Saivites bury them. Sātānis officiate as priests to the former, and Jangams to the latter. The pyre is kindled by the eldest male of the family, and a feast is held on the fifth day after the

funeral. The dead are believed to be born again into their former families."

Kondaikatti.—The name of a sub-division of Vellālas, meaning those who tie the whole mass of hair of the head (kondai) in a knot on the top of the head, as opposed to the kudumi or knot at the back of the partially shaved head.

Kondaita.—A sub-division of Doluva.

Kondaiyamkottai.—A sub-division of Maravan.

Kondalar.—Recorded, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a sub-caste of Vellāla. Kondalam means women's hair or a kind of dance, and it is possible that the name was returned by people of the Dēva-dāsi caste, who are rising in the social scale, and becoming absorbed in the Vellāla caste. Kondali, of doubtful meaning, has been returned by cultivators and agricultural labourers in North Arcot.

Kondh.—In the Administration Report of the Ganjam Agency, 1902–3, Mr. C. B. Cotterell writes that Kondh is an exact transliteration from the vernacular, and he knows of no reason, either sentimental or etymological, for keeping such spelling as Khond.

It is noted, in the Madras Census Report, 1891, that "the Khonds inhabit the hill tracts of Ganjam and parts of Vizagapatam, and are found also in Bengal and the Central Provinces. They call themselves Kui, a name identical with the Koi or Koya of the Godāvari agency and the south of the Jeypore Zemindāri. The Telugu people call them Kōtuvāndlu. The origin of the name Khond is doubtful, but Macpherson is, I think, right in deriving it from Telugu Konda, a hill. There is a tribe in Vizagapatam called Konda Dora or Konda Kāpu, and these people are also frequently called Kōtuvāndlu. All these names are derivatives of the root kô or kû, a

mountain. The number of sub-divisions returned is 58. The list includes many names of other castes, a fact which must be in part ascribed to the impossibility of distinguishing the true Khonds from persons returned as Kondavāndlu, Kondalu, Kōtuvāndlu, etc., terms which mean simply highlanders, and are applicable to all the hill tribes. For example, 12,164 Pānos have returned their main caste as Khond."

In a note on the Kui, Kandhī, or Khond language, Mr. G. A. Grierson writes as follows.* "The Kandhs or Khonds are a Dravidian tribe in the hills of Orissa and neighbouring districts. The tribe is commonly known under the name of Khond. The Oriyās call them Kandhs, and the Telugu people Gōnds or Kōds. The name which they use themselves is Ku, and their language should accordingly be denominated Kui. The word Ku is probably related to Kōī, one of the names by which the Gōnds used to denote themselves. The Kōī dialect of Gōndī is, however, quite different from Kui. The Khonds live in the midst of the Oriyā territory. Their habitat is the hills separating the districts of Ganjam and Vizagapatam in the Madras Presidency, and continuing northwards into the Orissa Tributary States, Bōd, Daspalla, and Nayagarh, and, crossing the Mahānadi, into Angul and the Khondmals. The Khond area further extends into the Central Provinces, covering the northern part Kalahandi, and the south of Patna. Kui is surrounded on all sides by Oriyā. Towards the south it extends towards the confines of the Telugu territory. The language varies locally, all over this area. The differences are not, however, great, though a man from one part of the country often experiences difficulty

* Linguistic Survey of India, IV, 1906.

in understanding the Kui spoken in other parts. There are two principal dialects, one eastern, spoken in Gumsur and the adjoining parts of Bengal, and one western, spoken in Chinna Kimedi. In the north, Kui has come under the influence of the neighbouring Aryan forms of speech, and a specimen forwarded from the Patna State was written in Oriyā with a slight admixture of Chattisgarhī. The number of Kandhs returned at the census of 1891 was 627,388. The language returns, however, give a much smaller figure. The reason is that many Kandhs have abandoned their native speech."

It has been noted that "the character of the Khonds varies as much as their language. Where there has been much contact with the plains, it is not as favourable as elsewhere. As a rule, they may be taken to be a bold, and fitfully laborious mountain peasantry of simple, but not undignified manners; upright in their conduct; sincere in their superstitions; proud of their position as landholders; and tenacious of their rights. The Linepada Khonds affect manners like Uriyas, and, among other things, will not eat pork (the flesh of wild pigs excepted). The Khond villages have quite the appearance of Uriya villages, the houses are built with mud walls, a thing unknown with Khonds in other parts of the Māliahs; and there is also much neat garden cultivation, which is rare elsewhere, probably because the produce thereof would be appropriated by the Uriyas. In 1902, the Linepada Muttah (settlement) presented the unusual spectacle of a Khond ruler as Dolabēhara, as well as Moliko, with the Uriya Paiks really at his beck and call. In some places, the most valuable portions of the land have passed into the possession of Sondis and low-country sowcars (money-lenders), who have pandered to the Khonds by advancing them money, the greater

portion of which has been expended in drink, the repayment being exacted in land. Except in the Goomsur Māliahs, paddy (rice) cultivation is not extensively carried on by the Khonds; elsewhere it is chiefly in the hands of the Uriyas. The Khonds take little trouble in raising their crops. The result is that, except in the Goomsur Māliahs, where they grow crops to sell in the market for profit, we find a poverty-stricken race, possessing hardly any agricultural stock, and no signs of affluence. In Kimedi, however, they are beginning to follow the example of Goomsur, and doubtless their material prosperity would much increase if some check could be devised to save them from the Uriyas and Sondis, who are steadily acquiring all the wet land, and utilising the Khonds merely as cultivators."

It is noted by Mr. F. Fawcett (1902)* that "up to within fifteen years ago, the Khônds of the Ganjam hills would not engage in any ordinary labour. They would not, for example, carry even the smallest article of the district officer's luggage. Elephants were accordingly provided by Government for carriage of tents and all camp luggage. But there has come a change, and, within the last ten years or so, the Khônds have taken to work in the ordinary way. Within the last few years, for the first time, the Khônds have been emigrating to Assam, to work in the tea-gardens. Accurate figures are not available, but the estimate of the best authority gives the number as about 3,000. This emigration is now stopped by edict. Of course, they do not set out, and go of their own accord. They are taken. The strange thing is that they go willingly." It was enacted, in an order of Government, in 1901,† that "in

* Man. March 1902. † G.O., No. 1020, Public, 8th October 1901.

exercise of the power conferred by section 3 of the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1901, and with the previous sanction of the Governor-General in Council, the Governor in Council is pleased to prohibit absolutely all persons from recruiting, engaging, inducing, or assisting any Native of India to emigrate from the tracts known as the scheduled districts in the district of Ganjam to any labour district of Assam."

In 1908, the Madras Government approved of certain proposals made by the Collector of Ganjam for utilising the services of the Kondhs in the conservancy of the forests in the Pondakhol Agency. The following is a summary of these proposals.* The chief difficulty to be contended against in Pondakhol is podu cultivation. This cultivation is not only devastating the hill tops and upper slopes, which should be kept well covered to preserve water for the upper reaches of the Rushikulya river, the chief source of irrigation in Ganjam, but is also the origin of most of the forest fires that rage throughout Pondakhol in the hot weather. The District Forest Officer, in discussing matters with the Kondhs, was told by some of the villagers that they would forego poduing if they had cattle to plough the lands in the plains and valleys. The supply of buffaloes would form the compensation for a right relinquished. The next aim should be to give the people work in the non-cultivation season, which is from the middle of January to the middle of July. This luckily coincides with the fire season. There is an abundance of useful work that the Kondhs can be engaged in, *e.g.*, rendering the demarcation lines permanent, making fire lines, constructing roads, and building inspection sheds. The

---

* G.O., No. 3005, Revenue, 3rd November 1908.

question arises as to how the Khonds should be repaid for their labour. Money is of little use to them in this out-of-the-way part of the country, and, if they got it, they would probably go to Surada to get drunk on it. It would be better to pay them in food-grain and cloths, and for this purpose departmental shops, and a regular system of accounts, such as are in force among the Chenchus in Kurnool, would be necessary.

In the course of a lament over the change which has come over the Kondhs who live in the range of hills near Berhampore, Mr. S. P. Rice writes as follows.* " Here they live in seclusion and in freedom, but also in the lowest depths of squalor and poverty. Once they loved gay colours. True Khond dresses, both male and female, are full of stripes and patterns, in blue, yellow, and red. Where has gone the love of colour? Instead of the long waistcloth ending in tails of blue and red, the man binds about him a wretched rag that can hardly be called a garment. Once the women took a delight in decking themselves with flowers, and a pride in the silver ornaments that jangled on their naked breasts. Where are now the grasses that adorned them, and the innocence that allowed them to go clothed only to the waist? Gone! withered by the blast of the breath of a 'superior civilization.' Gone are the hairpins of sāmbur bone—an inestimable treasure in the eyes of the true hill Khond. Gone are the floral decorations, and the fantastic head-dresses, which are the pride of the mountain tribes. In dull, unromantic squalor our Khond lives, moves, and has his being; and, ever as he moves, is heard the clanking upon his wrists of the fetters of his debt. Yet for all that he is happy." The hairpins

* Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life, 1901.

referred to above are made from sāmbur (deer: *Cervus unicolor*) bones, and stuck in the hair of male Kondhs. Porcupine quills are sometimes used by them as hairpins.

The following brief, but interesting summary of the Kondhs of Ganjam is given by Mr. C. F. MacCartie.* "The staple food of the Oriyas is rice, and of the Khond also during the two or three months that succeed the harvest. In February, they gather the crop of hill dholl, which, eked out with dry mohwa (*Bassia*) fruit, fresh mangoes, and mango stones ground to a sort of flour, pull them through the hot weather, with the help of various yams and edible roots that are plentiful in the jungles. When the south-west monsoon sets in, dry crops, consisting of millets, hill paddy, and Indian corn, are sown, which ripen from August on, and thus afford plentiful means of subsistence. The hot weather is generally called the sukki kalo, or hungry season, as the people are rather pinched just then. Turmeric is perhaps the most valuable crop which the Khonds raise, as it is the most laborious, in consequence of the time it takes to mature—two full years, and the constant field-work thus entailed, first in sheltering the young plants from the sun by artificial shade, and afterwards in digging, boiling, and burnishing the root for market. Tobacco is raised much as in the low country. It is generally grown in back-yards, as elsewhere, and a good deal of care is devoted to its cultivation, as the Khonds are inveterate smokers. Among the products of the jungles may be included myrabolams (*Terminalia* fruits), tassar silk, cocoons, and dammar, all of which are bartered by the finders to trading Pānos in small quantities, generally

* Madras Census Report, 1881.

for salt. [Honey and wax are said to be collected by the Kondhs and Benias, who are expert climbers of precipitous rocks and lofty trees. The Kondhs recognise four different kinds of bees, known by the following Oriya names:—(*a*) bhaga mohu, a large-sized bee (*Apis dorsata*); (*b*) sattapuri mohu, building its comb in seven layers (*Apis indica*); (*c*) binchina mohu, with a comb like a fan; (*d*) nikiti mohu, a very small bee.]* Wet paddy is, of course, grown in the valleys and low-lying bottoms, where water is available, and much ingenuity is exercised in the formation of bunds (embankments) to retain the natural supply of moisture. The Khond has a dead eye for a natural level; it is surprising how speedily a seemingly impracticable tract of jungle will be converted into paddy fields by a laborious process of levelling by means of a flat board attached to a pair of buffaloes. The chief feature of the dry cultivation is the destructive practice of kumeri. A strip of forest, primeval, if possible, as being more fertile, is burnt, cultivated, and then deserted for a term of years, which may vary from three to thirty, according to the density or otherwise of the population. The Kutiah Khonds are the chief offenders in respect of kumeri, to which they confine themselves, as they have no ploughs or agricultural cattle. In the rare instances when they grow a little rice, the fields are prepared by manual and pedal labour, as men, women, and children, assemble in the field, and puddle the mud and water until it assumes the desired consistency for the reception of the seed.

"The hair is worn long during childhood, but tied into a club when maturity is reached, and turbans are seldom worn. A narrow cloth is bound round the loins,

---

* Agricul: Ledger Series, Calcutta. No. 7, 1904.

with Tartan ends which hang down in front and behind, and a coarse long-cloth is wrapped round the figure when the weather is cold. The war dress of the Khonds is elaborate, and consists of a leather cuirass in front, and a flowing red cloak, which, with an arrangement of 'bison' horns and peacock's feathers, is supposed to strike awe into the beholder's mind. Khond women wear a red or parti-coloured skirt reaching the knee, the neck and bosom being left bare. Pāno females generally wear an upper cloth. All tattoo their faces. [Tattooing is said to be performed, concurrently with ear-boring, when girls are about ten years old. The tattoo marks are said to represent the implement used in tilling the soil for cultivation, moustache, beard, etc.] Ornaments of beads and brass bangles are worn, but the usage of diverse muttas (settlements) varies very much. In some parts of the Goomsur Māliahs, the use of glass and brass beads is confined to married women, virgins being restricted to decorations composed of plaited grass. Matrons wear ten or twelve ear-rings of different patterns, but, in many parts, young girls substitute pieces of broom, which are worn till the wedding day, and then discarded for brazen rings. Anklets are indispensable in the dance on account of the jingling noise they make, and gold or silver nose-rings are very commonly worn. [The Kondh of the Ganjam Māliahs has been described as follows.* "He centres his great love of decoration in his hair. This he tends, combs and oils, with infinite care, and twists into a large loose knot, which is caught with curiously shaped pins of sāmbur bone, gaily coloured combs and bronze hairpins with curiously ornamented designs, and it is then gracefully pinned over the left eyebrow. This

---

* Madras Mail, 1894.

knot he decorates according to his fancy with the blue feathers of the jay (Indian roller, *Coracias indica*), or the white feathers of the crane and stork, or the feathers of the more gorgeous peacock. Two feathers generally wave in front, while many more float behind. This knot, in the simple economy of his life, also does duty as a pocket or pincushion, for into it he stuffs his knife, his half-smoked cigarette of home-grown tobacco rolled in a sāl (*Shorea robusta*) leaf, or even his snuff wrapped in another leaf pinned together with a thorn. Round his waist he wraps a white cloth, bordered with a curious design in blue and red, of excellent home manufacture, and over his shoulder is borne his almost inseparable companion, the tanghi, of many curious shapes, consisting of an iron blade with a long wooden handle ornamented with brass wire. In certain places, he very frequently carries a bow and arrows, the former made of bent bamboo, the string of a long strip of bark, and the handle ornamented with stripes of the white quills of the peacock.]

"The Khonds are very keen in the pursuit of game, for which the hot weather is the appointed time, and, during this period, a sambar or 'bison' has but little chance of escape if once wounded by an arrow, as they stick to the trail like sleuth hounds, and appear insensible to distance or fatigue. The arms they carry are the bow, arrows, and tangi, a species of light battle-axe that inflicts a serious wound. The women are not addicted to drink, but the males are universally attached to liquor, especially during the hot weather, when the sago palm (solopo : *Caryota urens*) is in full flow. They often run up sheds in the jungle, near especially good trees, and drink for days together. A great many deaths occur at this season by falls from trees when tapping the liquor.

Feasts and sacrifices are occasions for drinking to excess, and the latter especially are often scenes of wild intoxication, the liquor used being either mohwa, or a species of strong beer brewed from rice or koeri. Khond women, when once married, appear to keep pretty straight, but there is a good deal of quiet immorality among the young men and girls, especially during the commencement of the hot weather, when parties are made up for fishing or the collection of mohwa fruit and other jungle berries. At the same time, a certain sense of shame exists, as instances are not at all uncommon of double suicide, when a pair of too ardent lovers are blown upon, and their *liaison* is discovered.

"The generality of Khond and Pâno houses are constructed of broad sâl logs hewn out with the axe, and thatched with jungle grass, which is impervious to white-ants. In bamboo jungles, bamboo is substituted for sâl. The Khond houses are substantially built but very low, the pitch of the roof never exceeding 8 feet, and the eaves being only about 4 feet from the ground, the object being to ensure resistance to the violent storms that prevail during the monsoons.

"Intermarriage between Khonds, Pânos, and Uriyas is not recognised, but cases do occur when a Pâno induces a Khond woman to go off with him. She may live with him as his wife, but no ceremony takes place. If a Pâno commits adultery with a Khond married woman, he has to pay a paronjo, or a fine of a buffalo, to the husband who retains his wife, and in addition a goat, a pig, a basket of paddy, a rupee, and a cavady (shoulder-pole) load of pots. If the adulterer is a Khond, he gets off with payment of the buffalo, which is slaughtered for the entertainment of the village. The husband retains his wife in this case, as also if he finds

her pregnant when first she comes to him; this is not an uncommon incident. Divorce of the wife on the husband's part is thus very rare, if it occurs at all, but cases are not unknown where the wife divorces her husband, and adopts a fresh alliance. When this takes place, her father has to return the whole of the gifts known as gontis, which the bridegroom paid for his wife when the marriage was originally arranged."

In a note on the tribes of the Agency tracts of the Vizagapatam district, Mr. W. Francis writes as follows.* "Of these, by far the most numerous are the Khonds, who are about 150,000 strong. An overwhelming majority of this number, however, are not the wild barbarous Khonds regarding whom there is such a considerable literature, and who are so prominent in Ganjam, but a series of communities descended from them, which exhibit infinite degrees of difference from their more interesting progenitors, according to the grade of civilisation to which they have attained. The only really primitive Khonds in Vizagapatam are the Dongria (jungle) Khonds of the north of Bissamkatak tāluk, the Dēsya Khonds who live just south-west of them in and around the Nīmgiris, and the Kuttiya (hill) Khonds of the hills in the north-east of the Gunupur tāluk. The Kuttiya Khond men wear ample necklets of white beads and prominent brass earrings, but otherwise they dress like any other hill people. Their women, however, have a distinctive garb, putting on a kind of turban on state occasions, wearing nothing above the waist except masses of white bead necklaces which almost cover their breasts, and carrying a series of heavy brass bracelets half way up their forearms. The dhangadi basa system (separate

* Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district.

hut for unmarried girls to sleep in) prevails among them in its simplest form, and girls have opportunities for the most intimate acquaintance before they need inform their parents they wish to marry. Special ceremonies are practiced to prevent the spirits of the dead (especially of those killed by tigers) from returning to molest the living. Except totemistic septs, they have apparently no sub-divisions.* The dress of the civilised Khonds of both sexes is ordinary and uninteresting. These civilised Khonds worship all degrees of deities, from their own tribal Jākara down to the orthodox Hindu gods; follow every gradation of marriage and funeral customs from those of their primitive forefathers to those of the low-country Telugu; speak dialects which range from good Khond through bastard patois down to corrupt Telugu; and allow their totemistic septs to be degraded down to, or divided into, the intipērulu of the plains."

There is a tradition that, in olden days, four Kondhs, named Kasi, Mendora, Bolti, and Bolo, with eyes the size of brass pots, teeth like axe-heads, and ears like elephant's ears, brought their ancestor Mandia Pātro from Jorasingi in Boad, and gave him and his children authority all over the country now comprised in Mahasingi, and in Kurtilli Barakhumma, Bodogodo, Balliguda, and Pussangia, on condition of settling their disputes, and aiding them in their rights. The following legendary account of the origin of the Kondhs is given by Mr. A. B. Jayaram Moodaliar. Once upon a time, the ground was all wet, and there were only two females on the earth, named Karaboodi and Tharthaboodi, each of whom was blessed with a single male child. The names

---

* A very interesting note on Totemism among the Khonds by Mr. J. E. Friend-Pereira has been published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, LXXIII, 1905.

of the children were Kasarodi and Singarodi. All these individuals sprang from the interior of the earth, together with two small plants called nangakoocha and badokoocha, on which they depended for subsistence. One day, when Karaboodi was cutting these plants for cooking, she accidentally cut the little finger of her left hand, and the blood dropped on the ground. Instantly, the wet soft earth on which it fell became dry and hard. The woman then cooked the food, and gave some of it to her son, who asked her why it tasted so much sweeter than usual. She replied that she might have a dream that night, and, if so, would let him know. Next morning, the woman told him that, if he would act on her advice, he would prosper in this world, that he was not to think of her as his mother, and was to cut away the flesh of her back, dig several holes in the ground, bury the flesh, and cover the holes with stones. This her son did, and the rest of the body was cremated. The wet soil dried up and became hard, and all kinds of animals and trees came into existence. A partridge scratched the ground with its feet, and rāgi (millet), maize, dhāl (pea), and rice sprung forth from it. The two brothers argued that, as the sacrifice of their mother brought forth such abundance, they must sacrifice their brothers, sisters, and others, once a year in future. A god, by name Boora Panoo, came, with his wife and children, to Thartha-boodi and the two young men, to whom Boora Panoo's daughters were married. They begat children, who were divided equally between Boora Panoo the grandfather and their fathers. Tharthaboodi objected to this division on the grounds that Boora Panoo's son would stand in the relation of Mamoo to the children of Kasarodi and Singarodi ; that, if the child was a female, when she got married, she would have to give a rupee to her Mamoo ;

and that, if it was a male that Boora Panoo's daughter brought forth, the boy when he grew up would have to give the head of any animal he shot to Mamoo (Boora Panoo's son). Then Boora Panoo built a house, and Kasarodi and Singarodi built two houses. All lived happily for two years. Then Karaboodi appeared in a dream, and told Kasarodi and Singarodi that, if they offered another human victim, their lands would be very fertile, and their cattle could flourish. In the absence of a suitable being, they sacrificed a monkey. Then Karaboodi appeared once more, and said that she was not pleased with the substitution of the monkey, and that a human being must be sacrificed. The two men, with their eight children, sought for a victim for twelve years. At the end of that time, they found a poor man, who had a son four years old, and found him, his wife and child good food, clothing, and shelter for a year. They then asked permission to sacrifice the son in return for their kindness, and the father gave his assent. The boy was fettered and handcuffed to prevent his running away, and taken good care of. Liquor was prepared from grains, and a bamboo, with a flag hoisted on it, planted in the ground. Next day, a pig was sacrificed near this post, and a feast was held. It was proclaimed that the boy would be tied to a post on the following day, and sacrificed on the third day. On the night previous to the sacrifice, the Janni (priest) took a reed, and poked it into the ground in several places. When it entered to a depth of about eight inches, it was believed that the god and goddess Tadapanoo and Dasapanoo were there. Round this spot, seven pieces of wood were arranged lengthways and crossways, and an egg was placed in the centre of the structure. The Khonds arrived from the various villages, and indulged in drink. The boy was teased,

and told that he had been sold to them, that his sorrow would affect his parents only, and that he was to be sacrificed for the prosperity of the people. He was conducted to the spot where the god and goddess had been found, tied with ropes, and held fast by the Khonds. He was made to lie on his stomach on the wooden structure, and held there. Pieces of flesh were removed from his back, arms and legs, and portions thereof buried at the Khond's place of worship. Portions were also set up near a well of drinking water, and placed around the villages. The remainder of the sacrificed corpse was cremated on a pyre set alight with fire produced by the friction of two pieces of wood. On the following day, a buffalo was sacrificed, and a feast partaken of. Next day, the bamboo post was removed outside the village, and a fowl and eggs were offered to the deity. The following stanza is still recited by the Janni at the buffalo sacrifice, which has been substituted for that of a human victim:—Oh! come, male slave; come, female slave. What do you say? What do you call out for? You have been brought, ensnared by the Haddi. You have been called, ensnared by the Domba. What can I do, even if you are my child? You are sold for a pot of food.

The ethnological section of the Madras Museum received a few years ago a very interesting relic in the shape of a human (Meriah) sacrifice post from Baligudu in Ganjam. This post, which was fast being reduced to a mere shell by white-ants, is, I believe, the only one now in existence. It was brought by Colonel Pickance, who was Assistant Superintendent of Police, and set up in the ground near the gate of the reserve Police barracks. The veteran members of a party of Kondhs, who were brought to Madras for the purpose of performing before

the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1906, became wildly excited when they came across this relic of their former barbarous custom.

"The best known case," Mr. Frazer writes,* "of human sacrifices systematically offered to ensure good crops is supplied by the Khonds or Kandhs. Our knowledge of them is derived from the accounts written by British officers, who, forty or fifty years ago, were engaged in putting them down. The sacrifices were offered to the earth goddess, Tari Pennu or Bera Pennu, and were believed to ensure good crops, and immunity from all diseases and accidents. In particular, they were considered necessary in the cultivation of turmeric, the Khonds arguing that the turmeric could not have a deep red colour without the shedding of blood. The victim, a Meriah, was acceptable to the goddess only if he had been purchased, or had been born a victim, that is the son of a victim father, or had been devoted as a child by his father or guardian."

In 1837, Mr. Russell, in a report on the districts entrusted to his control, wrote as follows.† "The ceremonies attending the barbarous rite, and still more the mode of destroying life, vary in different parts of the country. In the Māliahs of Goomsur, the sacrifice is offered annually to Thadha Pennoo (the earth) under the effigy of a bird intended to represent a peacock, with the view of propitiating the deity to grant favourable seasons and crops. The ceremony is performed at the expense of, and in rotation by, certain mootahs (settlements) composing a community, and connected together from local circumstances. Besides these periodical sacrifices,

* The Golden Bough, 1900.

† Selections from the Records, Government of India, No. V, Human Sacrifice and Infanticide, 1854.

others are made by single mootahs, and even by individuals, to avert any threatening calamity from sickness, murrain, or other cause. Grown men are the most esteemed (as victims), because the most costly. Children are purchased, and reared for years with the family of the person who ultimately devotes them to a cruel death, when circumstances are supposed to demand a sacrifice at his hands. They seem to be treated with kindness, and, if young, are kept under no constraint; but, when old enough to be sensible of the fate which awaits them, they are placed in fetters and guarded. Most of those who were rescued had been sold by their parents or nearest relations, a practice which, from all we could learn, is very common. Persons of riper age are kidnapped by wretches who trade in human flesh. The victim must always be purchased. Criminals, or prisoners captured in war, are not considered fitting subjects. The price is paid indifferently in brass utensils, cattle or corn. The Zanee (or priest), who may be of any caste, officiates at the sacrifice, but he performs the poojah (offering of flowers, incense, etc.) to the idol through the medium of the Toomba, who must be a Khond child under seven years of age. This child is fed and clothed at the public expense, eats with no other person, and is subjected to no act deemed impure. For a month prior to the sacrifice, there is much feasting and intoxication, and dancing round the Meriah, who is adorned with garlands, etc., and, on the day before the performance of the barbarous rite, is stupefied with toddy, and made to sit, or, if necessary, is bound at the bottom of a post bearing the effigy above described. The assembled multitude then dance around to music, and addressing the earth, say: 'Oh! God, we offer the sacrifice to you. Give us good crops, seasons, and health.' After which they address

the victim, 'We bought you with a price, and did not seize you. Now we sacrifice you according to custom, and no sin rests with us.' On the following day, the victim being again intoxicated and anointed with oil, each individual present touches the anointed part, and wipes the oil on his own head. All then proceed in procession around the village and its boundaries, preceded by music, bearing the victim and a pole, to the top of which is attached a tuft of peacock's feathers. On returning to the post, which is always placed near the village deity called Zakaree Pennoo, and represented by three stones, near which the brass effigy in the shape of a peacock is buried, they kill a hog in sacrifice and, having allowed the blood to flow into a pit prepared for the purpose, the victim, who, if it has been found possible, has been previously made senseless from intoxication, is seized and thrown in, and his face pressed down until he is suffocated in the bloody mire amid the noise of instruments. The Zanee then cuts a piece of flesh from the body, and buries it with ceremony near the effigy and village idol, as an offering to the earth. All the rest afterwards go through the same form, and carry the bloody prize to their villages, where the same rites are performed, part being interred near the village idol, and little bits on the boundaries. The head and face remain untouched, and the bones, when bare, are buried with them in the pit. After this horrid ceremony has been completed, a buffalo calf is brought in front of the post, and, his forefeet having been cut off, is left there till the following day. Women, dressed in male attire and armed as men, then drink, dance and sing round the spot, the calf is killed and eaten, and the Zanee is dismissed with a present of rice and a hog or calf."

In the same year, Mr. Arbuthnot, Collector of Vizagapatam, reported as follows. "Of the hill tribe Codooloo, there are said to be two distinct classes, the Cotia Codooloo and Jathapoo Codooloo. The former class is that which is in the habit of offering human sacrifices to the god called Jenkery, with a view to secure good crops. This ceremony is generally performed on the Sunday preceding or following the Pongal feast. The victim is seldom carried by force, but procured by purchase, and there is a fixed price for each person, which consists of forty articles such as a bullock, a male buffalo, a cow, a goat, a piece of cloth, a silk cloth, a brass pot, a large plate, a bunch of plantains, etc. The man who is destined for the sacrifice is carried before the god, and a small quantity of rice coloured with saffron (turmeric) is put upon his head. The influence of this is said to prevent his attempting to escape, even though set at liberty. It would appear, however, that, from the moment of his seizure till he is sacrificed, he is kept in a continued state of stupefaction or intoxication. He is allowed to wander about the village, to eat and drink anything he may take a fancy to, and even to have connection with any of the women whom he may meet. On the morning set apart for the sacrifice, he is carried before the idol in a state of intoxication. One of the villagers acts as priest, who cuts a small hole in the stomach of the victim, and with the blood that flows from the wound the idol is smeared. Then the crowds from the neighbouring villages rush forward, and he is literally cut into pieces. Each person who is so fortunate as to procure it carries away a morsel of the flesh, and presents it to the idol of his own village."

Concerning a method of sacrifice, which is illustrated by the post preserved in the Madras Museum, Colonel

Campbell records * that "one of the most common ways of offering the sacrifice in Chinna Kimedi is to the effigy of an elephant (hatti mundo or elephant's head) rudely carved in wood, fixed on the top of a stout post, on which it is made to revolve. After the performance of the usual ceremonies, the intended victim is fastened to the proboscis of the elephant, and, amidst the shouts and yells of the excited multitude of Khonds, is rapidly whirled round, when, at a given signal by the officiating Zanee or priest, the crowd rush in, seize the Meriah, and with their knives cut the flesh off the shrieking wretch as long as life remains. He is then cut down, the skeleton burnt, and the horrid orgies are over. In several villages I counted as many as fourteen effigies of elephants, which had been used in former sacrifices. These I caused to be overthrown by the baggage elephants attached to my camp in the presence of the assembled Khonds, to show them that these venerated objects had no power against the living animal, and to remove all vestiges of their bloody superstition." In another report, Colonel Campbell describes how the miserable victim is dragged along the fields, surrounded by a crowd of half intoxicated Khonds, who, shouting and screaming, rush upon him, and with their knives cut the flesh piecemeal from the bones, avoiding the head and bowels, till the living skeleton, dying from loss of blood, is relieved from torture, when its remains are burnt, and the ashes mixed with the new grain to preserve it from insects." Yet again, he describes a sacrifice which was peculiar to the Khonds of Jeypore. "It is," he writes, "always succeeded by the sacrifice of three human beings, two to the sun to the east and west of the village, and one in the centre,

* Personal Narrative of Service among the Wild Tribes of Khondistan.



MERIAH SACRIFICE POST.

with the usual barbarities of the Meriah. A stout wooden post about six feet long is firmly fixed in the ground, at the foot of it a narrow grave is dug, and to the top of the post the victim is firmly fastened by the long hair of his head. Four assistants hold his outstretched arms and legs, the body being suspended horizontally over the grave, with the face towards the earth. The officiating Junna or priest, standing on the right side, repeats the following invocation, at intervals hacking with his sacrificial knife the back part of the shrieking victim's neck. 'O! mighty Manicksoro, this is your festal day. To the Khonds the offering is Meriah, to kings Junna. On account of this sacrifice, you have given to kings kingdoms, guns and swords. The sacrifice we now offer you must eat, and we pray that our battle-axes may be converted into swords, our bows and arrows into gunpowder and balls; and, if we have any quarrels with other tribes, give us the victory. Preserve us from the tyranny of kings and their officers.' Then, addressing the victim:—'That we may enjoy prosperity, we offer you a sacrifice to our God Manicksoro, who will immediately eat you, so be not grieved at our slaying you. Your parents were aware, when we purchased you from them for sixty rupees, that we did so with intent to sacrifice you. There is, therefore, no sin on our heads, but on your parents. After you are dead, we shall perform your obsequies.' The victim is then decapitated, the body thrown into the grave, and the head left suspended from the post till devoured by wild beasts. The knife remains fastened to the post till the three sacrifices have been performed, when it is removed with much ceremony. In an account by Captain Mac Viccar of the sacrifice as carried out at Eaji Deso, it is stated that on the day of sacrifice the Meriah is surrounded by the Khonds, who

beat him violently on the head with the heavy metal bangles which they purchase at the fairs, and wear on these occasions. If this inhuman smashing does not immediately destroy the victim's life, an end is put to his sufferings by strangulation, a slit bamboo being used for the purpose. Strips of flesh are then cut off the back, and each recipient of the precious treasure carries his portion to the stream which waters his fields, and there suspends it on a pole. The remains of the mangled corpse are then buried, and funeral obsequies are performed seven days subsequently, and repeated one year afterwards."

The Kondhs of Bara Mootah promised to relinquish the rite on condition, *inter alia*, that they should be at liberty to sacrifice buffaloes, monkeys, goats, etc., to their deities with all the solemnities observed on occasions of human sacrifice ; and that they should be at liberty, upon all occasions, to denounce to their gods the Government, and some of its servants in particular, as the cause of their having relinquished the great rite.

The last recorded Meriah sacrifice in the Ganjam Māliahs occurred in 1852, and there are still Kondhs alive, who were present at it. Twenty-five descendants of persons who were reserved for sacrifice, but were rescued by Government officers, returned themselves as Meriah at the census, 1901. The Kondhs have now substituted a buffalo for a human being. The animal is hewn to pieces while alive, and the villagers rush home to their villages, to bury the flesh in the soil, and so secure prosperous crops. The sacrifice is not unaccompanied by risk to the performers, as the buffalo, before dying, frequently kills one or more of its tormenters. This was the case near Baliguda in 1899, when a buffalo killed the sacrificer. In the previous year, the desire of a village to intercept the bearer of the flesh for a

neighbouring village led to a fight, in which two men were killed.

It was the practice, a few years ago, at every Dassara festival in Jeypore, Vizagapatam, to select a specially fine ram, wash it, shave its head, affix thereto red and white bottu and nāmam (sect marks) between the eyes and down the nose, and gird it with a new white cloth after the manner of a human being. The animal being then fastened in a sitting posture, certain pūja (worship) was performed by a Brāhman priest, and it was decapitated. The substitution of animals for human victims is indicated by various religious legends. Thus, a hind was substituted for Iphigenia, and a ram for Isaac.

It was stated by the officers of the Meriah Agency that there was reason to believe that the Rāja of Jeypore, when he was installed on his father's death in 1860–61, sacrificed a girl thirteen years of age at the shrine of the goddess Durga in the town of Jeypore.* It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district (1907), that " goats and buffaloes now-a-days take the place of human Meriah victims, but the belief in the superior efficacy of the latter dies hard, and every now and again revives. When the Rampa rebellion of 1879–80 spread in this district, several cases of human sacrifice occurred in the disturbed tracts. In 1880, two persons were convicted of attempting a Meriah sacrifice near Ambadāla in Bissamkatak. In 1883, a man (a beggar and a stranger) was found at daybreak murdered in one of the temples in Jeypore, in circumstances which pointed to his having been slain as a Meriah; and, as late as 1886, a formal enquiry showed that there were ample grounds for the suspicion that the kidnapping of victims

---

* Manual of the Vizagapatam district.

still went on in Bastar." As recently as 1902, a petition was presented to the District Magistrate of Ganjam, asking him to sanction the performance of a human sacrifice. The memory of the abandoned practice is kept green by one of the Kondh songs, for a translation of which we are indebted to Mr. J. E. Friend-Pereira.*

"At the time of the great Kiabon (Campbell) Sahib's coming, the country was in darkness; it was enveloped in mist.

Having sent paiks to collect the people of the land, they, having surrounded them, caught the Meriah sacrificers.

Having caught the Meriah sacrificers, they brought them, and again they went and seized the evil councillors.

Having seen the chains and shackles, the people were afraid; murder and bloodshed were quelled.

Then the land became beautiful, and a certain Mokodella (Macpherson) Sahib came.

He destroyed the lairs of the tigers and bears in the hills and rocks, and taught wisdom to the people.

After the lapse of a month, he built bungalows and schools; and he advised them to learn reading and law.

They learnt wisdom and reading; they acquired silver and gold. Then all the people became wealthy."

Human sacrifice was not practiced in the Kurtilli Muttah of the Ganjam Māliahs. The reason of this is assigned to the fact that the first attempt was made with a crooked knife, and the sacrificers made such a bad business of it that they gave it up. Colonel Campbell gives another tradition, that, through humanity, one of the Kurtilli Pātros (head of a group of villages) threatened to leave the muttah if the practice was carried out.

---

* Journ. Asiat. Soc., Bengal, 1898.

Of a substituted sacrifice, which was carried out in the Ganjam Māliahs in 1894,* the following graphic account has been given. "Suddenly we came upon a number of Khonds carrying an immensely long bamboo, about fifty feet in length, surmounted by a gorgeous sort of balloon made of red and white cloth stretched on a bamboo frame. Attached to this were dried strips of pig's flesh, and the whole of the extraordinary structure was surmounted by a huge plume of peacock's feathers that waved gaily in the breeze. Along with this was carried another bamboo, not so long, slung all over with iron bells. We found that the men had been worshipping, and presenting these structures to a sylvan deity close by, and were now hastening to the small Khond village of Dhuttiegaum, the scene of the present Meriah sacrifice. Half a mile brought us to this hamlet, situated amongst a dense grove of trees, in the midst of which was tied to a curiously fluted and carved wooden post the sacrificial buffalo, a placid animal, with its body glistening with the oil of many anointings. The huge bamboo pole, with its crown of red and white cloth and peacock's feathers, and incongruous shreds of dried pig's flesh, was now erected in the centre of the village. The comparative quiet in the village did not last long, for on a sudden the air was rent with a succession of shrieks. With the sound of the beating of Māliah drums, and the blowing of buffalo horns, a party of Khonds came madly dancing and rushing down a steep hillside from some neighbouring village. They dashed up to the buffalo, and began frantically dancing with the villagers already assembled round and round the animal. Each man carried a green bough of some tree, a sharp knife, and a tanghi. They

* Madras Mail, 1894.

were all adorned in holiday attire, their hair combed and knotted on the forehead, and profusely decorated with waving feathers. All of them were more or less intoxicated. Various other villagers now began to arrive, thick and fast, in the same manner, with wavings of green boughs, flourishing of knives, and hideous yells. Each party was led by the headman or Moliko of the village. The dancing now became more general, and faster and more furious, as more and more joined the human 'merry go round,' circling about the unfortunate buffalo. The women, who had followed their lords and masters at a discreet distance, stood sedately by in a group, and took no part whatever in the revels. They were for the most part fine buxom girls, well groomed and oiled, and stood demurely watching everything with their sharp black eyes. The hitherto quiet buffalo, who for nearly two days had been without food and water, now began to get excited, and, straining at its tether, plunged and butted at the dancers, catching one man neatly on the nose so that the blood flowed copiously. However, the Khonds were too excited to care, and circled round and round the poor maddened brute, singing and blowing horns into its ears, beating drums, and every now and then offering it cakes brought with them from their villages, and then laying them on the top of the post as offerings. As they thus madly careered about, we had ample time to note their extraordinary costumes. One man had somehow got hold of an old blue Police overcoat, which he had put on inside out, and round his waist he had gathered what seemed to be a number of striped tent carpets, forming a stiff ballet skirt or kilt. He was one of the most athletic in spinning round the buffalo, flourishing a kitchen chopper. Another man's costume consisted of almost nothing at all. He

had, however, profusely daubed his body with white and black spots, and on his head he had centred all his decorative genius. The head in question was swathed in yards of cloth, terminating at the back in a perfect cascade of cock's feathers. He excitedly waved over this erection an ancient and very rusty umbrella, with many ventilations, with streamers of white cloth attached to the top. Others had tied on to their heads with bands of cloth the horns of buffaloes, or brass horns made in imitation of those of the spotted deer. Their long, black and curly hair hung in masses from beneath this strange erection, giving them a most startling appearance. The dancing round the buffalo lasted quite two hours, as they were waiting for the arrival of the Pātro, before concluding the final ceremonies, and the great man was fashionably late. To incite their jaded energies to further terpsichorean efforts, from time to time the dancers drank copious draughts of a kind of beer, used specially on these occasions, and made from kukuri, a species of grain. At last, the long expected Pātro arrived with the usual uproar of many deafening sounds, both artificial and natural, and with the waving of green boughs. On this occasion he walked last, while the whole of his retinue preceded him dancing, headed by an ancient and withered hag, carrying on her shoulders a Māliah drum of cow-hide stretched tightly over a hoop of iron, and vigorously beaten from behind her by a Khond with stiff thongs of dried leather. The great man himself walked sedately, followed by his 'charger,' a broken-kneed tat (pony), extraordinarily caparisoned, and led by a youth of tender years, whose sole garment consisted of a faded red drummer's coat of antiquated cut. As soon as the Pātro had seated himself comfortably on a log near the dancers, a change came over the scene.

The hitherto shouting and madly revolving throng stopped their gyrations round the stupefied beast, too much exhausted and frightened to offer any resistance, and, falling on its neck and body, began to smother it with caresses and endearments, and, to a low plaintive air, crooned and wailed over it, the following dirge, of which I append a rude translation. Tradition says that they used to sing it, with slight variations, over their human victims before the sacrifice :—

Blame us not, O buffalo !
  Thus for sacrificing thee,
For our fathers have ordained
  This ancient mystery.

We have bought thee with a price,
  Have paid for thee all thy worth.
What blame can rest upon us,
  Who save our land from dearth ?

Famine stares us in the face,
  Parched are our fields, and dry,
Death looks in at ev'ry door,
  For food our young ones cry.

Thadi Pennoo veils her face,
  Propitiate me, she cries,
Give to me of flesh and blood,
  A willing sacrifice.

That where'er its blood is shed,
  On land, or field, or hill,
There the gen'rous grain may spring,
  So ye may eat your fill.

Then be glad, O buffalo !
  Willing sacrifice to be,
Soon in Thadi's meadows green,
  Thou shalt brouse eternally.

After the Khonds had been chanting this sacrificial hymn for some time, the buffalo was untied from the carved

post, and led, with singing, dancing and shouting, and with the noise of many musical instruments, to a sacred grove a few hundred yards off, and there tied to a stake. As soon as it had been firmly tied, the Khonds threw off all their superfluous clothing to the large crowd of womankind waiting near, and stood round the animal, each man with his hand uplifted, and holding a sharp knife ready to strike at a moment's notice, as soon as the priest or Janni had given the word of command. The Janni, who did not differ outwardly from the others, now gave the buffalo a slight tap on the head with a small axe. An indescribable scene followed. The Khonds in a body fell on the animal, and, in an amazingly short time, literally tore the living victim to shreds with their knives, leaving nothing but the head, bones, and stomach. Death must, mercifully, have been almost instantaneous. Every particle of flesh and skin had been stripped off during the few minutes they fought and struggled over the buffalo, eagerly grasping for every atom of flesh. As soon as a man had secured a piece of flesh, he rushed away with the gory mass, as fast as he could, to his fields, to bury it therein according to ancient custom, before the sun had set. As some of them had to do good distances to effect this, it was imperative that they should run very fast. A curious scene now took place, for which we could obtain no explanation. As the men ran, all the women flung after them clods of earth, some of them taking very good effect. The sacred grove was cleared of people, save a few that guarded the remnants left of the buffalo, which were taken, and burnt with ceremony at the foot of the stake."

I pass on to the subject of infanticide among the Kondhs. It is stated, in the Manual of the Vizagapatam district, that female infanticide used to be very common all over the Jeypore country, and the Rājah is said to

have made money out of it in one large tāluk (division). The custom was to consult the Dāsari (priest) when a child was born as to its fate. If it was to be killed, the parents had to pay the Amīn of the tāluk a fee for the privilege of killing it ; and the Amīn used to pay the Rājah three hundred rupees a year for renting the privilege of giving the license and pocketing the fees. The practice of female infanticide was formerly very prevalent among the Kondhs of Ganjam, and, in 1841, Lieutenant Macpherson was deputed to carry into effect the measures which had been proposed by Lord Elphinstone for the suppression of the Meriah sacrifices and infanticide. The custom was ascribed to various beliefs, viz., (1) that it was an injunction by god, as one woman made the whole world suffer ; (2) that it conduces to male offspring ; (3) that woman, being a mischief-maker, is better out of the world than in it ; (4) that the difficulty, owing to poverty, in providing marriage portions was an objection to rearing females. From Macpherson's well known report * the following extracts are taken. "The portion of the Khond country, in which the practice of female infanticide is known to prevail, is roughly estimated at 2,400 square miles, its population at 60,000, and the number of infants destroyed annually at 1,200 to 1,500. The tribes (who practice infanticide) belong to the division of the Khond people which does not offer human sacrifices. The usage of infanticide has existed amongst them from time immemorial. It owes its origin and its maintenance partly to religious opinions, partly to ideas from which certain very important features of Khond manners arise. The Khonds believe that the supreme deity, the sun god, created all things

* Selections from the Records of the Government of India (Home Department), V., 1845.

good; that the earth goddess introduced evil into the world; and that these two powers have since conflicted. The non-sacrificing tribes make the supreme deity the great object of their adoration, neglecting the earth goddess. The sacrificing tribes, on the other hand, believe the propitiation of the latter power to be the most necessary worship. Now the tribes which practice female infanticide hold that the sun god, in contemplating the deplorable effects produced by the creation of feminine nature, charged men to bring up only as many females as they could restrain from producing evil to society. This is the first idea upon which the usage is founded. Again, the Khonds believe that souls almost invariably return to animate human forms in the families in which they have been first born and received. But the reception of the soul of an infant into a family is completed only on the performance of the ceremony of naming upon the seventh day after its birth. The death of a female infant, therefore, before that ceremonial of reception, is believed to exclude its soul from the circle of family spirits, diminishing by one the chance of future female births in the family. And, as the first aspiration of every Khond is to have male children, this belief is a powerful incentive to infanticide." Macpherson, during his campaign, came across many villages of about a hundred houses, in which there was not a single female child. In like manner, in 1855, Captain Frye found many Baro Bori Khond villages without a single female child in them.

In savage societies, it has been said, sexual unions were generally effected by the violent capture of the woman. By degrees these captures have become friendly ones, and have ended in a peaceful exogamy, retaining the ancient custom only in the ceremonial form. Whereof an excellent example is afforded by the Kondhs,

concerning whom the author of the Ganjam Manual writes as follows. "The parents arrange the marriages of their children. The bride is looked upon as a commercial speculation, and is paid for in gontis. A gonti is one of anything, such as a buffalo, a pig, or a brass pot; for instance, a hundred gontis might consist of ten bullocks, ten buffaloes, ten sacks of corn, ten sets of brass, twenty sheep, ten pigs, and thirty fowls. The usual price, however, paid by the bridegroom's father for the bride, is twenty or thirty gontis. A Khond finds his wife from among the women of any mutāh (village) than his own. On the day fixed for the bride being taken home to her husband's house, the pieces of broom in her ears are removed, and are replaced by brass rings. The bride is covered over with a red blanket, and carried astride on her uncle's back towards the husband's village, accompanied by the young women of her own village. Music is played, and in the rear are carried brass playthings, such as horses, etc., for the bridegroom, and cloths and brass pins as presents for the bridegroom from the bride's father. On the road, at the village boundary, the procession is met by the bridegroom and the young men of his village, with their heads and bodies wrapped up in blankets and cloths. Each is armed with a bundle of long thin bamboo sticks. The young women of the bride's village at once attack the bridegroom's party with sticks, stones, and clods of earth, which the young men ward off with the bamboo sticks. A running fight is in this manner kept up until the village is reached, when the stone-throwing invariably ceases, and the bridegroom's uncle, snatching up the bride, carries her off to her husband's house. This fighting is by no means child's play, and the men are sometimes seriously injured. The whole party is then entertained by the bridegroom

as lavishly as his means will permit. On the day after the bride's arrival, a buffalo and a pig are slaughtered and eaten, and, upon the bride's attendants returning home on the evening of the second day, a male and female buffalo, or some less valuable present, is given to them. On the third day, all the Khonds of the village have a grand dance or tamāsha (festivity), and on the fourth day there is another grand assembly at the house of the bridegroom. The bride and bridegroom are then made to sit down on a cot, and the bridegroom's brother, pointing upwards to the roof of the house, says: "As long as this girl stays with us, may her children be as men and tigers; but, if she goes astray, may her children be as snakes and monkeys, and die and be destroyed!" In his report upon the Kondhs (1842), Macpherson tells us that "they hold a feast at the bride's house. Far into the night the principals in the scene are raised by an uncle of each upon his shoulders, and borne through the dance. The burdens are suddenly exchanged, and the uncle of the youth disappears with the bride. The assembly divides itself into two parties. The friends of the bride endeavour to arrest, those of the bridegroom to cover her flight, and men, women, and children mingle in mock conflict. I saw a man bearing away upon his back something enveloped in an ample covering of scarlet cloth. He was surrounded by twenty or thirty young fellows, and by them protected from the desperate attacks made upon him by a party of young women. The man was just married, and the burden was his blooming bride, whom he was conveying to his own village. Her youthful friends were, according to custom, seeking to regain possession of her, and hurled stones and bamboos at the head of the devoted bridegroom, until he reached the confines of his own village. Then the tables were

turned, and the bride was fairly won; and off her young friends scampered, screaming and laughing, but not relaxing their speed till they reached their own village." Among the Kondhs of Gumsūr, the friends and relations of the bride and bridegroom collect at an appointed spot. The people of the female convoy call out to the others to come and take the bride, and then a mock fight with stones and thorny brambles is begun by the female convoy against the parties composing the other one. In the midst of the tumult the assaulted party takes possession of the bride, and all the furniture brought with her, and carry all off together.* According to another account, the bride, as soon as she enters the bridegroom's house, has two enormous bracelets, or rather handcuffs of brass, each weighing from twenty to thirty pounds, attached to each wrist. The unfortunate girl has to sit with her two wrists resting on her shoulders, so as to support these enormous weights. This is to prevent her from running away to her old home. On the third day the bangles are removed, as it is supposed that by then the girl has become reconciled to her fate. These marriage bangles are made on the hills, and are curiously carved in fluted and zigzag lines, and kept as heirlooms in the family, to be used at the next marriage in the house. According to a still more recent account of marriage among the Kondhs † an old woman suddenly rushes forward, seizes the bride, flings her on her back, and carries her off. A man comes to the front, catches the groom, and places him astride on his shoulder. The human horses neigh and prance about like the live quadruped, and finally rush away to the outskirts of the village. This is a signal for

* J. A. R. Stevenson. Madras Journ: Lit. Science, VI, 1837.

† J. E. Friend-Pereira. Journ: Asiat: Soc. Bengal, LXXI, 1902.

the bride's girl friends to chase the couple, and pelt them with clods of earth, stones, mud, cowdung, and rice. When the mock assault is at an end, the older people come up, and all accompany the bridal pair to the groom's village. A correspondent informs me that he once saw a Kondh bride going to her new home, riding on her uncle's shoulders, and wrapped in a red blanket. She was followed by a bevy of girls and relations, and preceded by drums and horns. He was told that the uncle had to carry her the whole way, and that, if he had to put her down, a fine of a buffalo was inflicted, the animal being killed and eaten. It is recorded that a European magistrate once mistook a Kondh marriage for a riot, but, on enquiry, discovered his mistake.

Reference has been made above to certain brass playthings, which are carried in the bridal procession. The figures include peacocks, chamæleons, cobras, crabs, horses, deer, tigers, cocks, elephants, human beings, musicians, etc. They are cast by the *cire perdue* process. The core of the figure is roughly shaped in clay, according to the usual practice, but, instead of laying on the wax in an even thickness, thin wax threads are first made, and arranged over the core so as to form a network, or placed in parallel lines or diagonally, according as the form of the figure or fancy of the workman dictates. The head, arms, and feet are modelled in the ordinary way. The wax threads are made by means of a bamboo tube, into the end of which a moveable brass plate is fitted. The wax, being made sufficiently soft by heat, is pressed through the perforation at the end of the tube, and comes out in the form of long threads, which must be used by the workmen before they become hard and brittle. The chief place where these figures are made is Belugunta, near Russellkonda in

Ganjam. It is noted by Mr. J. A. R. Stevenson * that the Kondhs of Gumsūr, to represent their deities Jara Pennu, the Linga Dēvata, or Petri Dēvata, keep in their houses brass figures of elephants, peacocks, dolls, fishes, etc. If affliction happens to any one belonging to the household, or if the country skin eruption breaks out on any of them, they put rice into milk, and, mixing turmeric with it, sprinkle the mixture on the figures, and, killing fowls and sheep, cause worship to be made by the Jāni, and, making bāji, eat.

At a marriage among the Kondhs of Baliguda, after the heads of the bride and bridegroom have been brought together, an arrow is discharged from a bow by the younger brother of the bridegroom into the grass roof of the hut. At the betrothal ceremony of some Kondhs, a buffalo and pig are killed, and some of the viscera eaten. Various parts are distributed according to an abiding rule, viz., the head to the bridegroom's maternal uncle, the flesh of the sides to his sisters, and of the back among other relations and friends. Some Kondh boys of ten or twelve years of age are said to be married to girls of fifteen or sixteen. At Shubernagiri, in the Ganjam Māliahs, are two trysting trees, consisting of a jāk (*Artocarpus integrifolia*) and mango growing close together. The custom was for a Kondh, who was unable to pay the marriage fees to the Pātro (headman), to meet his love here by night and plight his troth, and then for the two to retire into the jungle for three days and nights before returning to the village. Afterwards, they were considered to be man and wife.

It is noted by Mr. Friend-Pereira † that, at the ceremonial for settling the preliminaries of a Kondh

---

* Madras Journ: Lit. & Science, VI, 1837. † *Loc. cit.*

marriage, a knotted string is put into the hands of the sēridāhpa gātāru (searchers for the bride), and a similar string is kept by the girl's people. The reckoning of the date of the betrothal ceremony is kept by undoing a knot in the string every morning.

Some years ago, a young Kondh was betrothed to the daughter of another Kondh, and, after a few years, managed to pay up the necessary number of gifts. He then applied to the girl's father to name the day for the marriage. Before the wedding took place, however, a Pāno went to the girl's father, and said that she was his daughter (she had been born before her parents were married), and that he was the man to whom the gifts should have been paid. The case was referred to a council meeting, which decided in favour of the Pāno.

Of birth ceremonies, the following account is given by Mr. Jayaram Moodaliar. The woman is attended in her confinement by an elderly Kondh midwife, who shampooes her abdomen with castor-oil. The umbilical cord is cut by the mother of the infant. For this purpose, the right thigh of the baby is flexed towards its abdomen, and a piece of cooled charcoal placed on its right knee. The cord is placed on the charcoal, and divided with the sharp edge of an arrow. The placenta is buried close to the house near a wall. After the cord has been severed, the mother daubs the region of the infant's navel with her saliva, over which she smears castor-oil. She then warms her hands at a fire, and applies them to the infant's body. [It is stated, in the Ganjam Manual, that the infant is held before a hot fire, and half roasted.] The warming is repeated several times daily for four or five days. When the umbilical cord has sloughed off, a spider is burnt to ashes over a fire, placed in a cocoanut shell, mixed with castor-oil, and applied by means of a

fowl's feather to the navel. The infant's head is shaved, except over the anterior fontanelle, the hair from which is removed after about a month. Its body is smeared all over daily with castor-oil and tumeric paste until it is a month old. The mother then goes with her baby and husband to her brother's house, where the infant is presented with a fowl, which is taken home, and eaten by her husband. The appropriation of the fowl varies according to the locality. In some places, the infant's father, and other relations, except the mother, may eat it, and, in others, both its parents, and relations living in the house, may do so. In still other places, the father, paternal grandfather and grandmother, and paternal uncle, may partake of it.

The naming ceremony among the Kondhs of Gumsūr is thus described by Mr. J. A. R. Stevenson. "Six months after birth, on a fixed day, they make gāduthuva (the ceremony of naming the child). On that day, killing a dog, and procuring liquor, they make bāji. They wash the feet of the child. The Jāni being come, he ties a cord from the haft to the point of a sickle, and they divine by means of it. Having assembled the petrilu (literally ancestors, but here denoting household images or gods), they put rice on the sickle. As the names (of the ancestors or family?) are repeated in order, each time the rice is put on, that name is chosen on the mention of which the sickle moves, and is given to the child. They then drink liquor, and eat bāji. They give rice and flesh to the Jāni."

Of death ceremonies, the following account is given in the manual of the Ganjam district. "Immediately after death, a cloth is wrapped round the corpse, but no cloths or valuables are removed. A portion of paddy (unhusked rice), and all the cooking utensils of the deceased are

given to the village Sitra. [The Sitras manufacture the brass rings and bangles worn by the Kondhs.] The body is then burnt. On the following day, a little rice is cooked, put on a dish, and laid on the spot where the corpse was burnt. An incantation is then pronounced, requesting the spirit of the deceased person to eat the rice and enjoy itself, and not to change itself into a devil or tiger, and come bothering the survivors in the village. Three days after death, the madda ceremony is performed. An effigy of the deceased is prepared of straw, which is stuck up in front of or on the roof of the house, and the relations and friends assemble, lament, and eat at the expense of the people of the deceased's house. Each person brings a present of some kind or other, and, on his departure on the next day, receives something of slightly higher value. The death of a man in a village requires a purification, which is made by the sacrifice of a buffalo on the seventh day after death. If a man is killed by a tiger, the purification is made by the sacrifice of a pig, the head of which, cut off with a tangi (axe) by a Pāno, is passed between the legs of the men in the village, who stand in a line astraddle. It is a bad omen for him if the head touches any man's legs. If the Pātro attends a funeral, he gets a fee of a goat for firing his gun, to drive away the dead man's ghost." According to Mr. Jayaram Moodaliar, if a person is killed by a tiger, the head of the decapitated pig is placed in a stream, and, as it floats down, it has to pass between the legs of the villagers. If it touches the legs of any of them, it forebodes that he will be killed by a tiger.

In a note on the death ceremonies in Gumsūr, Mr. J. A. R. Stevenson writes as follows. "On life ceasing, they tie a sheep to the foot of the corpse. They carry the clothes, brass eating-dish, brass drinking-vessel,

ornaments, grain in store, and the said sheep to the burning-ground. Having burned the body, and gone around about the pile, they leave all those things there, and, beating drums, return home. The garments the Pānos take away. They procure liquor, and drink it. They then go to their respective houses, and eat. On the next day, they kill a she-buffalo, and get together a great quantity of liquor. The whole of the tribe (near and distant relations) being assembled, they make bāji, and eat. They beat drums. If the deceased were of any consequence, dancers come and dance to the sound of the drums, to whom some animal is given, which they take, and go away. Subsequently, on the twelfth day, they carry a hog to the spot where the body was burned, and, after perambulating the site of the pyre, return to their home, where they kill a hog in the place set apart for their household gods, and, procuring liquor, make bāji, the members of the tribe eating together. Should a tiger carry off any one, they throw out of doors all the (preserved) flesh belonging to him, and all the people of the village, not excepting children, quit their homes. The Jāni, being come with two rods of the tummeca tree (*Acacia arabica*), he plants these in the earth, and then, bringing one rod of the condatamara tree (*Smilax macrophylla*), he places it transversely across the other two. The Jāni, performing some incantation, sprinkles water on them. Beginning with the children, as these and the people pass through the passage so formed, the Jāni sprinkles water on them all. Afterwards, the whole of them go to their houses, without looking behind them."

In connection with customs observed in the event of death, Mr. Jayaram Moodaliar writes that " if a woman's husband dies, she removes the beads from her neck, the

metal finger rings, ankle and wrist ornaments, and the ornament worn in the lobe of one ear, that worn in the lobe of the other ear being retained. These are thrown on the chest of the corpse, before it is cremated. The widow does not remove the ornaments worn in the helices of the ears, and in the alæ and septum of the nose. When a Khond dies, his body is cremated. The people in the house of the deceased are not allowed to cook their food on that or the next day, but are fed by their relations and friends in the village. On the day after death, rice and a fowl are cooked separately, put in big leaf cups, and placed on the spot where the corpse was burnt. The spirit of the deceased is invited to eat the meal, and asked not to do them any harm. On the third day, the relations bathe, and smear their heads with clay. An effigy of the deceased is made, and stuck up on the roof of the house. The practice of making an image of the deceased obtains among the Goomsūr Khonds, but, in some other places, is considered inauspicious. On the seventh day, a purificatory ceremony is gone through, and a buffalo killed, with which, and the indispensable liquor, the guests are entertained. At a village two miles from Baliguda, a boy, about sixteen years old, died. His gold ear-rings and silver bracelets were not removed, but burnt. His cloths were thrown on the pyre. Rāgi and other grains, paddy, etc., were placed near the funeral pyre, but not in the fire. The food-stuffs, and ~ buffalo, were divided among the Haddis, who are the servants of the headman (Pātro) of the muttah. They also took the remains of the jewels, recovered from the ashes after cremation."

It is recorded by Mr. F. Fawcett * that "once after death, a propitiatory sacrifice is made of animals of the

* Journ. Anthrop. Soc., Bombay, II, 249.

deceased to the Pidāri Pitta (ancestor) for the sake of the deceased's spirit, which, after this festive introduction to the shades, must take its chance. A curious ceremony, which I do not remember seeing noted anywhere, is performed the day after death. Some boiled rice and a small fowl are taken to the burning place. The fowl is split down the breast, and placed on the spot ; it is afterwards eaten, and the soul is invoked to enter a new-born child."

The following note on a Kondh funeral dance in the Ganjam Māliahs is from the pen of an eye-witness.* "The dead Pātro is, as usual, a hill Uriya, of ancient lineage, no less than that of the great totem of nola bompsa or the ancestral wood-pigeon that laid its eggs in the hollow of a bamboo, from which this family sprang. Various and most interesting are the totems of the Māliahs. In passing, I may mention another curious totem, that of the pea-fowl, two eggs of which a man brought home to his wife, who laid them in an earthen pot, and from them sprang a man-child, the progenitor of a famous family. But to return to the Pātro. Before sunset, mourned by his two wives, the younger and favourite one carrying a young child of light bamboo colour, he had been burnt, without much ceremony, in an open grassy spot, his ashes scattered to the four winds of heaven, and the spot marked by wooden posts driven deep into the soil. Not now would be celebrated the funeral obsequies, but a month hence on the accession of his eldest son, the future Pātro, a fair lad of eighteen years. As the day for the obsequies drew near, an unusual bustle filled the air. Potters from the low country arrived, and hundreds upon hundreds of

* Madras Mail, 1896.

earthen pots of all sizes and shapes were turned, and piled in great heaps near the village. Huge buffaloes, unconscious of their approaching fate, lay tethered near, or wallowing in bovine luxury in a swamp hard by. Messengers had been sent far and near to all the Pātros, Molikos, and Bissoyis. Even the Kuttiya Khonds were not left out. The auspicious morning at length dawned, when a distinguished company began to arrive, each chief with his followers, and in many cases his wives and little children, all dressed in their best, and bent on enjoying everything to the utmost. I noticed fine stalwart men from Udiagiri on the edge of the ghauts, together with Khonds from more civilised Baliguda, and Khonds from cold and breezy Daringabadi, cheerful in spite of the numbers of their relatives that had found a horrid tomb inside a man-eating tiger that since 1886 (together with another ally lately started) had carried off more than four hundred of their kith and kin. Distinguished amongst even that wild horde for savagery were the Khonds from the Kuttiya country, who live on tops of hills, and whose women are seldom, if ever, seen. These are remarkable for their enormous quantities of frizzly hair tied in huge chignons over the right brow, and decorated with feathers of every hue—the jay, the parrot, the peacock and the white quills of the paddy-bird predominating. Their short, sturdy limbs are hung in every direction with necklaces and curious blue beads and cut agates, said to be dug out of ancient burial places and cromlechs in Central India. Certain it is that almost no inducement will prevail on a Khond to voluntarily part with these precious heirlooms. As each fresh detachment arrived, their first occupation was to go to a neighbouring tank (pond), and, after a wash and decoration of head and hair with either the orthodox

feathers, or, prettier still, with wreaths of wild flowers, to repair to the late chief's house, and, presenting themselves at the door, condole, with much vigour of lungs, with the now less disconsolate widows on their recent loss. This ceremony over, they tendered their allegiance to the young son of the dead Pātro, permitted by Government to take his place, and each man received from him an earthen cooking-pot, and each circle of villages a buffalo. The Khond is a beef eater, but a curious custom prevails in some parts, that a married woman must abstain from the flesh of a cow. These preliminary ceremonies over, the crowd adjourned, with great noise of shouting, blowing of buffalo horns, and beating of drums, to the open grassy spot marked by posts, where the late Pātro had been burned, and where a recently killed buffalo, weltering in its gore, now lay. Among the throng of men, women and children, most of the former more than slightly elevated by drinking copious draughts of a kind of beer made from the kuhari grain, were three Khonds carrying long poles surmounted by huge bunches of peacock feathers that blazed in the sunlight like emeralds and sapphires. The funeral dance now commenced. The dance itself is simple in the extreme, for, when the right spot was reached, old men and young began gyrating round and round in a large circle, a perfect human merry-go-round. The old grey-beards, plodding slowly round the ring, and stamping on the soil with their aged feet, presented a great contrast to the younger and wilder men, who capered and pranced about, sometimes outside the circle, waving their tanghis in the air, and every now and then leaping up to the slain buffalo, and dipping their axes into its blood, and then back again, dancing more wildly than ever, round and round from west to east, till the

eye ached to behold the perpetual motion of this animated wheel. In the centre revolved the three men with the huge bunches of peacock feathers afore-mentioned. When any dropped out of the circle to rest there were many eager and willing to take their places, and so, with relays of fresh dancers, this human circle revolved on for three whole days, only ceasing at nightfall, when by large fires the various tribes cooked in the earthen pots provided the buffaloes presented by the new Pātro. In olden days, an animal was given to each village, but on this occasion only to a circle of villages, occasioning thereby certain grumblings among the wiseacres for the good old days of the past, when not only buffaloes in plenty, but Meriah human victims as well were lavishly provided and sacrificed. 'Ichabod,' said they in Khond, 'the glory of the Māliahs hath departed.' On the afternoon of the third day, the Pātros, Molikas, Bissoyis, and others of the great men began to depart with their retainers for their distant homes in the jungles, having had a thoroughly good time. The women, who had been very shy at first, fled at my approach, now, after three days' familiarity with a white face, began to show symptoms of friendliness, so that they allowed me to go quite near to them to examine their pretty necklaces of coloured grasses, silver coins, and curious beads, and to count the numbers of small sticks (generally about twelve or fifteen) of broom that were arranged in the shape of a crescent round the outer edges of the pierced ears of each unmarried village belle, and to observe at close quarters the strange tattooed patterns in blue of zigzag and curve that to my eyes disfigured their otherwise comely faces. As to beauty of figure, I think very few can compare with a young and well-grown Khond maiden, with her straight back and handsome

proportions. It was, therefore, without much difficulty that I persuaded some of them to dance before me. Six buxom girls stepped out, all of them the respectable daughters of well-to-do Khonds, prepared to dance the famous peacock dance. Round their supple but massive waists was twisted the strip of national Khond cloth of blue, red and white, and for bodices what could be more becoming than their glossy brown skins of nature's millinery, gracefully wreathed with garlands of coloured grasses and strings of gay beads. The polished jet black hair, neatly tied in a knot at the back, and decorated with pretty lacquered and silver combs, or with forest flowers, added yet more to their picturesque appearance. Each girl now took a long strip of white cloth, and, winding it round her waist, allowed one end to trail at the back in the fashion of a Liberty sash. This was supposed to represent the tail of the peacock. Three of the girls then faced the three others, and, with their left hands resting on their hips, and their elbows sticking out (to represent the wings), and the right arms extended in front with the fingers outstretched to simulate the neck and beak, began to dance to the ear-piercing shrieks of cracked trumpet, and to the deep beatings of a Māliah drum marking excellent time. On and on they danced, advancing and retiring, and now and then crossing over (not unlike the first figure of the quadrille), while their tinkling feet, 'like little mice, stole in and out,' the heels alternately clashing against each other, in exact time to the music, and the lips gracefully waving from side to side as they advanced or retired. There was perfect grace of movements combined with extreme modesty, the large expressive eyes veiled by the long lashes never once being raised, and the whole demeanour utterly oblivious

to the crowd of enthusiastic admirers that surrounded them on all sides. But for the wild scene around, the noise and shrieking of instruments, and the fantastic dresses of the Khonds (many of whom had buffalo horns tied on to their painted faces, or had decorated their heads with immense wigs of long black hair), one might easily have supposed these shrinking damsels to have been the pick of a Mission School specially selected for propriety to dance the South Indian kummi before, say, an itinerant Bishop of ascetic tendencies and æsthetic temperament. When their heaving, panting bodies showed that exhausted nature claimed them for her own, the man with the trumpet or the drum would rush up, and blow or beat it almost under their drooping heads, urging them with shouts and gesticulations to further energy, till at length the shades of night crept over the hills, and, with one accord, the dancing and the deafening music ceased, while the six girls stole quietly back and were soon lost in the crowd."

Of superstitions among the Kondhs, the following are recorded by Mr. Jayaram Moodaliar :—

"When a Kondh starts out on a shooting expedition, if he first meets an adult female, married or unmarried, he will return home, and ask a child to tell the females to keep out of his way. He will then make a fresh start, and, if he meets a female, will wave his hand to her as a sign that she must keep clear of him. Before a party start out for shooting, they warn the females not to come in their way. The Kondh believes that, if he sees a female, he will not come across animals in the jungle to shoot. If a woman is in her menses, her husband, brothers, and sons living under the same roof, will not go out shooting for the same reason.

A Kondh will not leave his village when a jāthra (festival) is being celebrated, lest the god Pennu should visit his wrath on him.

They will not cut trees, which yield products suitable for human consumption, such as the mango, jāk, jambul (*Eugenia Jambolana*), or iluppai (*Bassia*) from which they distil a spirituous liquor. Even though these trees prevent the growth of a crop in the fields, they will not cut them down.

If an owl hoots over the roof of a house, or on a tree close thereto, it is considered unlucky, as foreboding a death in the family at an early date. If an owl hoots close to a village, but outside it, the death of one of the villagers will follow. For this reason, the bird is pelted with stones, and driven off.

They will not kill a crow, as this would be a sin amounting to the killing of a friend. According to their legend, soon after the creation of the world there was a family consisting of an aged man and woman, and four children, who died one after the other in quick succession. Their parents were too aged to take the necessary steps for their cremation, so they threw the bodies away on the ground, at some distance from their home. God appeared to them in their dreams one night, and promised that he would create the crow, so that it might devour the dead bodies.

They do not consider it a sin to kill a Brahminy kite (*Haliastur indus :* Garuda pakshi), which is held in veneration throughout Southern India. A Kondh will kill it for so slight an offence as carrying off his chickens.

They will not cut the crops with a sickle with a serrated edge, such as is used by the Oriyas, but use a straight-edged knife. The crops, after they have been cut, are removed to the village, and threshed by hand,

and not with the help of cattle. While this is being done, strangers (Kondh or others) may not look on the crop, or speak to them, lest their evil eye should be cast on them. If a stranger is seen approaching near the threshing-floor, the Kondhs keep him off by signalling to him with their hands, without speaking. The serrated sickle is not used, because it produces a sound like that of cattle grazing, which would be unpropitious. If cattle were used in threshing the crop, it is believed that the earth god would feel insulted by the dung and urine of the animals.

They believe that they can transform themselves into tigers or snakes, half the soul leaving the body and becoming changed into one of these animals, either to kill an enemy, or satisfy hunger by having a good feed on cattle in the jungle. During this period, they are believed to feel dull and listless, and disinclined for work, and, if a tiger is killed in the forest, they will die synchronously. Mr. Fawcett informs me that the Kondhs believe that the soul wanders during sleep. On one occasion, a dispute arose owing to a man discovering that another Kondh, whose spirit used to wander about in the guise of a tiger, ate up his spirit, and he became ill.

When cholera breaks out in a village, all males and females smear their bodies from head to foot with pig's fat liquefied by heat, and continue to do so until a few days after the disappearance of the dread disease. During this time, they do not bathe, lest the smell of the fat should be washed away."

The Kondhs are said * to prevent the approach of the goddess of small-pox by barricading the paths with

* Macpherson. Memorials of Service in India.

thorns and ditches, and boiling caldrons of stinking oil. The leopard is looked upon in some way as a sacred beast by the Kondhs of the northern Māliahs. They object to a dead leopard being carried through their villages, and oaths are taken on a leopard's skin.

Referring to elf stones, or stones of the dead in European countries, to which needles, buttons, milk, eggs, etc., are offered, Mr. F. Fawcett describes * a Kondh ceremony, in which the ground under a tree was cleared in the form of a square, within which were circles of saffron (turmeric), charcoal, rice, and some yellow powder, as well as an egg or a small chicken. A certain Kondh had fever caused by an evil spirit, and the ceremony was an invitation to it to come out, and go to another village.

The following account of a cow-shed sacrifice is given by Mr. Fawcett.† "A special liquor is brewed from grain for the ceremony, on the first day of which there is a general fast, a pig is bought by general subscription, and dragged to the place where it is to be sacrificed by a rope 'through its belly.' The pig is stoned to death, but, ere it dies, each Khond cuts off some of the hair and a little piece of the ear, which are treasured. The meat is divided among them, and cooked with rice. The priest goes from house to house, and performs the ceremony of the cow-shed. The ropes of the cattle (chiefly buffaloes) which are out grazing are tied to the central point in the cow-shed, and the other ends are laid on the ground across the shed. These ropes are the visible objects, to which sacrifice is made. The head of a chicken is buried near the ends tied to the post, and near it are ranged leaves, on which are placed

* Journ., Anth. Soc., Bombay, II, 1890. † *Ibid.*

rice, flesh of the pig, and a bit of its ear. A little in front of these is buried a rotten egg. The chicken, whose head is buried, is boiled, and eaten by children who have not yet donned a cloth. The Khond puts the rice, piece of the ear, and the hair of the pig, under the roof. In the evening the cattle come home, and are tied by the ropes used in the ceremony. Then the women break their fast—they *must* eat then. Drinking and dancing occupy the two following days, during which no manure is removed from the cow-shed. On the third day, the Khonds come out with a lump of it in the hand, and throw it in one place, forming a heap, on which the priest pours liquor and rice."

The following example of a Kondh oath is given by Mr. J. A. R. Stevenson. "The subject of the circumstance is first repeated by the swearing party, and a basket containing the following things is held before him :—

A blood-sucker (lizard).
A bit of tiger's skin.
A peacock's feather.
Earth from a 'white-ant' hill.
Rice mixed with fowl's blood.
A lighted lamp.

He proceeds with his oath, touching each object in the basket at that part of the oath which refers to that object. 'Oh! father (god), I swear, and, if I swear falsely, then, Oh! father, may I become shrivelled and dry like a blood-sucker, and thus die. May I be killed by a tiger. May I crumble to dust like this white-ant's hill. May I be blown about like this feather. May I be extinguished like this lamp.' In saying the last words, he puts a few grains of rice in his mouth, and blows out the lamp, and the basket with its contents is made to touch the top of his head."

In 1904, a case illustrating the prevailing belief in witchcraft occurred in the Vizagapatam hill tracts. The youngest of three brothers died of fever, and, when the body was cremated, the fire failed to consume the upper portion. The brothers concluded that death must have been caused by the witchcraft of a certain Kondh. They accordingly attacked him, and killed him. After death, the brothers cut the body in half, and dragged the upper half to their own village, where they attempted to nail it up on the spot where their deceased brother's body failed to burn. The accused were arrested on the spot, with the fragment of the Kondh's corpse. They were sentenced to death, and the sentence was confirmed by the High Court.*

In 1906, a Kondh, suspecting a Pāno girl of having stolen some cloths and a silver ornament from him, went to the dhengada house in Sollagodo, where the girl slept with other unmarried girls, and took her to his village, where he confined her in his house. On the following day, he took her to an Oriya trader, who thrashed her, in order to make her confess to the theft. Subsequently, some of the villagers collected to see her undergo the ordeal of boiling water. A pot nearly full of water was boiled, some cow-dung and sacred rice added, and a rupee placed in the pot. The girl was ordered to take out the rupee. This she did three times, but, on the fourth occasion, the water scalded her hand and forearm. She was then ordered to pay as a fine her ear-ring, which was worth one rupee. This she did, as it was the custom for an unsuccessful person to hand over some property. Her right hand was practically destroyed as the result of the scalding. An elderly Pātro (headman)

* Madras Police Report, 1904.

deposed that the ordinary practice in trials of this sort is to place two pots of water, one boiling and the other cold. In the boiling water a rupee and some rice are placed, and the suspected person has to take out the rupee once, and should then dip his hand in the cold water. If the hand is then scalded, the person is considered guilty, and has to pay a fine to the caste.

In trial by immersion in water, the disputants dive into a pool, and he who can keep under water the longest is considered to be in the right. On one occasion, some years ago, when two villages were disputing the right of possession of a certain piece of land, the Magistrate resorted to a novel method to settle the dispute. He instituted a tug-of-water between an equal number of representatives of the contending parties. The side which won took possession of the disputed property, to the satisfaction of all.*

In connection with sacred rice, which has been referred to above, reference may be made to the custom of Mahaprasād Songatho. "It is prevalent among the Khonds and other hill tribes of Ganjam and Orissa, and is found among the Oriyas. Sangatho means union or friendship. Mahaprasād Songatho is friendship sworn by mahaprasād, *i.e.*, cooked rice consecrated to god Jagannath of Puri. The remains of the offering are dried and preserved. All pilgrims visiting Puri invariably get a quantity of this mahaprasād, and freely distribute it to those who ask for it. It is regarded as a sacred thing, endowed with supreme powers of forgiving the sins and wrongs of men by mere touch. It is not only holy itself, but also sanctifies everything done in its presence. It is believed that one dare not

---

* Madras Mail, 1894.

commit a foul deed, utter a falsehood, or even entertain an evil thought, when it is held in the hands. On account of such beliefs, witnesses in law suits (especially Oriyas) are asked to swear by it when giving evidence. Mahaprasād Songatho is sworn friendship between two individuals of the same sex. Instances are on record of friendship contracted between a wealthy and cultured townsman and a poor village rustic, or between a Brāhmin woman of high family and a Sūdra servant. Songatho is solemnised with some ceremonies. On an auspicious day fixed for the purpose, the parties to the Songatho, with their relatives, friends and well-wishers, go to a temple in procession to the festive music of flutes and drum. There, in that consecrated place, the would-be friends take a solemn oath, with the god before them, mahaprasād in their hands, and the assemblage to witness that they will be lifelong friends, in spite of any changes that might come over them or their families. The ceremony closing, there will be dinners, gifts and presents on both sides, and the day is all mirth and merriment. Thus bound by inseparable ties of friendship, they live to the end of their lives on terms of extreme intimacy and affection. They seize every opportunity of meeting, and living in each other's company. They allow no festival to pass without an exchange of new cloths, and other valuable presents. No important ceremony is gone through in any one's house without the other being invited. Throughout the year, they will send each other the various fruits and vegetables in their respective seasons. If one dies, his or her family does not consider the bond as having been snapped, but continues to look upon the other more or less in the same manner as did the deceased. The survivor, if in need of help, is sure to receive

assistance and sympathy from the family of the deceased friend. This is how the institution is maintained by the less civilised Oriyas of the rural parts. The romance of the Songatho increases with the barbarity of the tribe. The Khonds, and other hill tribes, furnish us with an example of Songatho, which retains all its primitive simplicity. Among them, Songatho is ideal friendship, and examples of Damon and Pythias are not rare. A Khond has been known to ruin himself for the sake of his friend. He willingly sacrifices all that he has, and even his life, to protect the interests of his friend. The friends have nothing but affection for each other." *

It is noted, in the Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district, that "the Khonds steal cattle, especially those belonging to Brinjāri gangs, in an open manner, for the sake of their flesh. In 1898, at Veppiguda near Gudāri a party of them attacked four constables who were patrolling the country to check these thefts, thrashed them, and carried off all their property and uniforms. Efforts to arrest these men resulted in the inhabitants of their village fleeing to the hills, and, for a time, it looked as if there was danger of others joining them, and of the Khonds going out. In 1882, the Khonds of Kālahandi State rose against the Uriyas, and murdered some hundreds of them. Luckily the invitation to join them, conveyed by the circulation of the head, fingers, hair, etc., of an early victim, was not accepted by the Khonds of this district." The news of the rising was conveyed to Mr. H. G. Prendergast, Assistant Superintendent of Police, by a Domb disguised as a fakir, who carried the report concealed in his languti (cloth). He

* Madras Mail, 1908.

was rewarded with a silver bangle. At a meeting held at the village of Balwarpur, it was decided that the Kultas should all be killed and swept out of the country. As a sign of this, the Kondhs carried brooms about. At Asurgarh the police found four headless corpses, and learnt from the widows all that they had to say about the atrocities. The murders had been committed in the most brutal way. All the victims were scalped while still alive, and one had an arm and a leg cut off before being scalped. As each victim died, his death was announced by three taps on a drum given slowly, followed by shouting and dancing. The unfortunate men were dragged out of their houses, and killed before their women and children. Neither here nor anywhere else were the women outraged, though they were threatened with death to make them give up buried treasure. One woman was in this way made to dig up a thousand rupees. On a tamarind tree near the village of Billat, affixed to it as a trophy, there was the scalped head of a Kulta, hacked about in the most horrible way.*

The fact is noted by Mr. Jayaram Moodaliar that the Kondh system of notation is duodecimal. Thirteen is twelve and one, forty three twelves and four, and so forth.

Kondh Bibliography.

Aborigines of the Eastern Ghâts. Journ. Asiat. Soc. Bengal, XXV, 39–52, 1856.

Caldwell, R. Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or South Indian Family of Languages, 2nd edn., appendix, 516–17, 1875.

---

* *See* G.O., Judicial, 14th August 1882, No. 952, Khond Rising.

Campbell, G. Specimens of Languages of India, including those of the Aboriginal Tribes of Bengal, the Central Provinces and the Eastern Frontier, 95–107, 1904, Calcutta.

Campbell, Major-General. Personal Narrative of Service amongst the Wild Tribes of Khondistan, 1864.

Dalton, E. T. Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal, 285–301, 1872.

Duff, Rev. A. The First Series of Government Measures for the Abolition of Human Sacrifices among the Khonds. Selections from the Calcutta Review, 194–257, 1845–6.

Fawcett, F. Miscellaneous Notes. Journ., Anthrop. Soc., Bombay, II, 247–51.

Francis, W. Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam District, Vol. I, 1907.

Friend-Pereira, J. E. Marriage Customs of the Khonds. Journ., Asiat. Soc. Bengal, LXXI, part III, 18–28, 1903.

Friend-Pereira, J. E. Totemism among the Khonds. Journ., Asiat. Soc., Bengal, LXXIII, Part III, 39–56, 1905.

Frye, Captain. Dialogues and Sentences in the Kondh Language, with an English translation, 1851, Cuttack.

Frye, Captain. Fables in the Kondh Language, with an English translation, 1851, Cuttack.

Frye, Captain. Fables in the Kondh Language, with an Oriya translation, 1851, Cuttack.

Frye, Captain. The History of Joseph in the Kui or Kondh Language, 1851, Cuttack.

Frye, Captain. Primer and Progressive Reading Lessons in the Kondh Language, with an Oriya translation, 1851, Cuttack.

Frye, Lieut. J. P. On the Uriya and Kondh Population of Orissa. Journ., Roy. Asiat. Soc. of Great Britain and Ireland, XVII, 1–38, 1860.

Grierson, G. A. Linguistic Survey of India, IV, 457–71, 1906.

History of the Rise and Progress of the Operations for the Suppression of Human Sacrifice and Female Infanticide in the Hill tracts of Orissa. Selections from the Records of the Government of India (Home Department) No. V, 1854, Calcutta.

Hunter, W. W. Orissa II, 67–100, 1872.

Huttmann, G. H. Lieut. Macpherson's Report upon the Khonds of the Districts of Ganjam and Cuttack. Calcutta Review, VIII, 1–51, 1847.

Huttmann, G. H. Captain Macpherson's Report upon the Khonds of the Districts of Ganjam and Cuttack. Calcutta Review, X, 273–341, 1848.

Lingum Letchmajee. Introduction to the Grammar of the Kui or Kondh Language, 2nd edn., 1902, Calcutta.

Macpherson, Captain S. C. An account of the Religious Opinions and Observances of the Khonds of Goomsūr and Boad. Journ., Roy. Asiat. Soc. of Great Britain and Ireland, VII, 172–99, 1843.

Macpherson, Captain S. C. An account of the Religion of the Khonds in Orissa. Journ., Roy. Asiat. Soc. of Great Britain and Ireland, XIII, 216–74, 1852.

Macpherson, Lieut. Report upon the Khonds of the Districts of Ganjam and Cuttack, 1863, Madras.

Maltby, T. J. Ganjam District Manual, 65–87, 1882.

Rice, S. P. Occasional Essays on Native South Indian Life, 97–102, 1901.

Risley, H. H. The Tribes and Castes of Bengal, I, 397–413, 1891.

Smith, Major J. McD. Practical Handbook of the Khond Language, 1876, Cuttack.

Taylor, Rev. W. On the Language, Manners, and Rites of the Khonds or Khoi Jati of the Goomsūr Mountains from documents furnished by J. A. R. Stevenson. Madras Journ. Lit. and Science, VI, 17–46, 1837.

Taylor, Rev. W. Some Additional Notes on the Hill Inhabitants of the Goomsūr Mountains. Madras Journ., Lit. and Science, VII, 89–104, 1838.

Kondra.—The Kondras or Kondoras are a fishing caste in Ganjam, who fish in ponds, lakes, rivers, and backwaters, but are never engaged in sea-fishing. It has been suggested that the name is derived from konkoda, a crab, as they catch crabs in the Chilka lake, and sell them. The Kondras rank very low in the social scale, and even the Haddis refuse to beat drums for them, and will not accept partially boiled rice, which they have touched. In some places, the members of the caste call themselves Dāsa Dīvaro, and claim descent from the boatmen who rowed the boat when King Bharatha went to Chithrakutam, to inform Rāma of the death of Dasaratha. Apparently the caste is divided into two endogamous sections, viz., Macha Kondras, who follow the traditional occupation of fishing, and Dandāsi Khondras, who have taken to the duties of village watchmen. As examples of septs or bamsams, the following may be cited:—kāko (crow), bilva (jackal), gaya (cow), kukkiriya (dogs), ghāsia (grass), bholia (wild dog), sanguna (vulture). A few said that reverence is paid to the animals after which the bamsam is named before the marriage ceremonies, but this was denied by others. The headman of the caste is styled Bēhara, and he is assisted by the Dolobēhara and Bhollobaya. There is also a caste

messenger called Chattia. The Bēhara receives a fee of a rupee on occasions of marriage, and one anna for death ceremonies.

Girls are married either before or after puberty. Sometimes a girl is married in performance of a vow to the sahada (*Streblus asper*) tree. The ground round the tree is cleaned, a new cloth is then tied round the trunk, and a bow and arrow are rested against it. The Bēhara officiates as priest, and on behalf of the girl, places near the tree twelve handfuls or measures of rice and twelve of dāl (peas: *Cajanus indicus*), and twelve pieces of string on a leaf, as provisions for the bridegroom. If the girl has not reached maturity, she must remain seven days near the tree; otherwise she remains four days. On the last day, the Bēhara, sitting close to the tree, says: "We have given you provisions for twelve years. Give us a tsado-patra (deed of separation)." This is written on a palmyra leaf, and thrown down near the tree.

The dead are cremated, and the corpses of both men and women are said to be placed face downwards on the pyre. Among many other castes, only those of women are placed in this position. The death ceremonies are similar to those observed by many Oriya castes. A bit of bone is removed from the burning-ground, and food offered to it daily until the tenth day, when all the agnates, as well as the brothers-in-law and sons-in-law of the deceased, are shaved. The sons of the sister of the dead person are also expected to be shaved if they are fatherless; but, if their father is alive, they are shaved on the following day.

The Kondras regard Ganga-dēvi as their caste deity, but worship also other deities, *e.g.*, Chāmunda, Buddhi, and Kālika.

Konga.—Konga or Kongu is a territorial term, meaning inhabitant of the Kongu country. It has, at recent times of census, been returned as a division of a large number of classes, mostly Tamil, which include Ambattan, Kaikōlan, Kammālan, Kūravan, Kusavan, Malayan, Oddē, Pallan, Paraiyan, Shānān, Uppara, and Vellāla. It is used as a term of abuse among the Badagas of the Nīlgiri hills. Those, for example, who made mistakes in matching Holmgren's wools, were scornfully called Konga by the onlookers. Similarly, in parts of the Tamil country, a tall, lean and stupid individual is called a Kongan.

Konga Vellāla.—For the following note on the Konga Vellālas of the Trichinopoly district, I am indebted to Mr. F. R. Hemingway. They seem to have little in common with the other Vellālas, except their name, and appear to hold a lower position in society, for Reddis will not eat with them, and they will dine with Tottiyans and others of the lower non-Brāhman castes. They live in compact communities, generally in hamlets. Their dwellings are generally thatched huts, containing only one room. They are cultivators, but not well off. Their men can generally be recognized by the number of large gold rings which they wear in the lobes of the ears, and the pendant (murugu), which hangs from the upper part of the ears. Their women have a characteristic tāli (marriage badge) of large size, strung on to a number of cotton threads, which are not, as among other castes, twisted together. They also seem always to wear an ornament called tāyittu, rather like the common cylindrical talisman, on the left arm.

The Konga Vellālas are split into two endogamous divisions, viz., the Konga Vellālas proper, and the Tondan or Ilakanban-kūttam (servant or inferior sub-division).

The latter are admittedly the offspring of illegitimate intercourse with outsiders by girls and widows of the caste, who have been expelled in consequence of their breach of caste rules.

The Kongas proper have an elaborate caste organisation. Their country is divided into twenty-four nādus, each comprising a certain number of villages, and possessing recognised head-quarters, which are arranged into four groups under the villages of Palayakōttai, Kāngayam, Pudūr and Kadayūr, all in the Coimbatore district. Each village is under a Kottukkāran, each nādu under a Nāttu-kavundan or Periyatanakkāran, and each group under a Pattakkāran. The last is treated with considerable respect. He wears gold toe-rings, is not allowed to see a corpse, and is always saluted with clasped hands. He is only occasionally called in to settle caste disputes, small matters being settled by the Kottukkārans, and matrimonial questions by the Nāttu-kavundan. Both the Kongas proper, and the Tondans have a large number of exogamous septs, the names of which generally denote some article, the use of which is taboo, *e.g.*, kādai (quail), pannai (*Celosia argentea*, a pot-herb). The most desirable match for a boy is his maternal uncle's daughter. To such an extent is the preference for such unions carried out, that a young boy is often married to a grown-up woman, and it is admitted that, in such cases, the boy's father takes upon himself the duties of a husband until his son has reached maturity, and that the wife is allowed to consort with any one belonging to the caste whom she may fancy, provided that she continues to live in her husband's house. With widows, who are not allowed to remarry, the rules are more strict. A man convicted of undue intimacy with a widow is expelled from the caste, unless

she consents to his leaving her and going back to the caste, and he provides her with adequate means to live separately. The form of consent is for the woman to say that she is only a mud vessel, and has been broken because polluted, whereas the man is of bell-metal, and cannot be utterly polluted. The erring man is readmitted to the caste by being taken to the village common, where he is beaten with an erukkan (arka : *Calotropis gigantea*) stick, and by providing a black sheep for a feast to his relatives.

At weddings and funerals, the Konga Vellālas employ priests of their own caste, called Arumaikkārans and Arumaikkāris. These must be married people, who have had children. The first stage, so far as a wife is concerned, is to become an elutingalkāri (woman of seven Mondays), without which she cannot wear a red mark on her forehead, or get any of her children married. This is effected, after the birth of at least one child, by observing a ceremonial at her father's house. A pandal (booth) of green leaves is erected in the house, and a fillet of pungam (*Pongamia glabra*) and tamarind twigs is placed round her head. She is then presented with a new cloth, prepares some food and eats it, and steps over a mortar. A married couple wait until one of their children is married, and then undergo the ceremony called arumaimanam at the hands of ten Arumaikkārans and some Pulavans (bards among the Kaikōlans), who touch the pair with some green grass dipped in sandal and water, oil, etc. The man then becomes an Arumaikkāran, and his wife an Arumaikkāri. All people of arumai rank are treated with great respect, and, when one of them dies, a drum is beaten by a man standing on another man's shoulders, who receives as a present seven measures of grain measured, and an equal quantity unmeasured.

The betrothal ceremony takes place at the house of the future bride, in the presence of both the maternal uncles, and consists in tying fruit and betel leaf in the girl's cloth. On the wedding day, the bridegroom is shaved, and an Arumaikkāri pours water over him. If he has a sister, the ceremony of betrothing his prospective daughter to her son, is performed. He then goes on horseback, carrying some fruit and a pestle, to a stone planted for the occasion, and called the nāttukal, which he worships. The stone is supposed to represent the Kongu king, and the pestle the villagers, and the whole ceremony is said to be a relic of a custom of the ancient Kongu people, to which the caste formerly belonged, which required them to obtain the sanction of the king for every marriage. On his return from the nāttukal, balls of white and coloured rice are taken round the bridegroom, to ward off the evil eye. His mother then gives him three mouthfuls of food, and eats the remainder herself, to indicate that henceforth she will not provide him with meals. A barber then blesses him, and he repairs on horseback to the bride's house, where he is received by one of her party similarly mounted. His ear-rings are put in the bride's ears, and the pair are carried on the shoulders of their maternal uncles to the nāttukal. On their return thence, they are touched by an Arumaikkāran with a betel leaf dipped in oil, milk and water. The tāli (marriage badge) is worshipped and blessed, and the Arumaikkāran ties it on her neck. The barber then pronounces an elaborate blessing, which runs as follows: "Live as long as the sun and moon may endure, or Pasupatisvarar (Siva) at Karūr. May your branches spread like the banyan tree, and your roots like grass, and may you flourish like the bamboo. May ye twain be like the flower and the thread, which

together form the garland and cleave together, like water and the reed growing in it." If a Pulavan is present, he adds a further blessing, and the little fingers of the contracting couple are linked together, anointed with milk, and then separated.

The death ceremonies are not peculiar, except that the torch for the pyre is carried by a Paraïyan, and not, as among most castes, by the chief mourner, and that no ceremonies are performed after the third day. The custom is to collect the bones on that day and throw them into water. The barber then pours a mixture of milk and ghi (clarified butter) over a green tree, crying poli, poli.

The caste has its own beggars, called Mudavāndi (*q.v.*).

Kongara (crane).—An exogamous sept of Padma Sālē, and Kamma.

Konhoro.—A title of Bolāsi.

Konkani.—Defined, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as a territorial or linguistic term, meaning a dweller in the Konkan country (Canara), or a person speaking the Konkani dialect of Marāthi. Kadu Konkani (bastard Konkani) is a name opposed to the Gōd or pure Konkanis. In South Canara, "the Konkani Brāhmans are the trading and shop-keeping class, and, in the most out-of-the-way spots, the Konkani village shop is to be found." *

The following note on Konkanis is extracted from the Travancore Census Report, 1901. "The Konkanis include the Brāhman, Kshatriya, and Vaisya castes of the Sārasvata section of the Gauda Brāhmans. The Brāhmans of this community differ, however, from the Konkanastha Mahārāshtra Brāhmans belonging to the

* Manual of the South Canara district.

Drāvida group. The Konkani Sūdras who have settled on this coast are known by a different name, Kudumikkar. The Konkanis' original habitation is the bank of the Sārasvati, a river well known in early Sanskrit works, but said to have lost itself in the sands of the deserts north of Rajputana. According to the Sahyādrikanda, a branch of these Sārasvatas lived in Tirhut in Bengal, whence ten families were brought over by Parasurāma to Gōmantaka, the modern Goa, Panchakrōsi, and Kusasthali. Attracted by the richness and beauty of the new country, others followed, and the whole population settled themselves in sixty villages and ninety-six hamlets in and around Goa, the settlers in the former being called Shashtis (Sanskrit for sixty), and those in the latter being called Shannavis or Shenavis (Sanskrit for ninety-six). The history of those Sārasvatas was one of uninterrupted general and commercial prosperity until about twenty years after the advent of the Portuguese. When King Emanuel died and King John succeeded him, the policy of the Goanese Government is believed to have changed in favour of religious persecution. A large efflux to the Canarese and Tulu countries was the result. Thence the Konkanis appear to have migrated to Travancore and Cochin, and found a safe haven under the rule of their Hindu sovereigns. In their last homes, the Konkanis extended and developed their commerce, built temples, and endowed them so magnificently that the religious institutions of that community, especially at Cochin and Alleppey, continue to this day almost the richest in all Malabar.

"Canter Visscher writes* that 'the Canarese who are permanently settled in Malabar are the race best

* Letters from Malabar. Translation. Madras, 1862.

known to the Europeans, not only because the East India Company trade with them and appoint one of their members to be their merchant, giving him the attendance of two Dutch soldiers : but also because from the shops of these people in town we obtain all our necessaries, except animal food. Some sell rice, others fruits, others various kinds of linen, and some again are money-changers, so that there is hardly one who is not engaged in trade.' The occupation of the Konkanis has been commerce ever since the advent of the Portuguese in India. Some of them make pāpatams * (popadams) which is a condiment of almost universal consumption in Malabar. Till recently, the Konkanis in Travancore knew nothing else than trade. But now, following the example of their kinsmen in Bombay and South Canara, they are gradually taking to other professions.

" Having settled themselves in the Canarese districts, most of the Konkanis came under the influence of Madhavāchārya, unlike the Shenavis, who still continue to be Smartas. The worship of Venkatarāmana, the presiding deity of the Tirupati shrine, is held in great importance. Every Konkani temple is called Tirumala Dēvasmam, as the divinity that resides on the sacred hill (Tirumala) is represented in each."

Konsāri.—The Konsāris derive their name from konsa, a bell-metal dish. They are Oriya workers in bell-metal, and manufacture dishes, cups and plates. Brāhmans are employed by them as purōhits (priests) and gurus (preceptors). They eat fish and mutton, but

* Fine cakes made of gram flour and a fine species of alkali, which gives them an agreeable taste, and serves the purpose of making them rise and become very crisp when fried.

not fowls or beef, and drink liquor. Marriage is infant. Remarriage of widows and divorcées is permitted.

Koonapilli vāndlu.—Beggars attached to Padma Sālēs.

Koppala.—A section of Velamas, who tie the hair in a knot (koppu) on the top of the head, and an exogamous sept of Mutrāchas, whose females do up their hair in a knot when they reach puberty.

Kōra (sun).—A sept of Gadaba, Mūka Dora, and Rōna.

Koracha.—*See* Korava.

Koraga.—The Koragas are summed up, in the Madras Census Report, 1901, as being a wild tribe of basket-makers and labourers, chiefly found in Mudbidri, and in Puttūr in the Uppinangadi tāluk of South Canara. They are, Mr. M. T. Walhouse writes,* "a very quiet and inoffensive race; small and slight, the men seldom exceeding five feet six inches; black-skinned, like most Indian aborigines, thick-lipped, noses broad and flat, and hair rough and bushy. Their principal occupation is basket-making, and they must labour for their masters. They live on the outskirts of villages, and may not dwell in houses of clay or mud, but in huts of leaves, called koppus. Like many of the wild tribes of India, they are distinguished by unswerving truthfulness. The word of a Koragar is proverbial."

The Koragas rank below the Holeyas. In some towns, they are employed by the sanitary department as scavengers. They remove the hide, horns, and bones of cattle and buffaloes, which die in the villages, and sell them mainly to Māppilla merchants. They accept food, which is left over after feasts held by various castes.

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst., IV., 1875.

Some are skilful in the manufacture of cradles, baskets, cylinders to hold paddy, winnowing and sowing baskets, scale-pans, boxes, rice-water strainers, ring-stands for supporting pots, coir (cocoanut fibre) rope, brushes for washing cattle, etc. They also manufacture various domestic utensils from soapstone, which they sell at a very cheap rate to shopkeepers in the bazar.

"Numerous slave-castes," Mr. Walhouse continues, "exist throughout India, not of course recognised by law—indeed formally emancipated by an Act of Government in 1843—but still, though improved in condition, virtually slaves. Their origin and status are thus described. After the four principal classes, who sprang from Brahma, came six Anuloma castes, which arose from the intercourse of Brāhmans and Kshatriyas with women of the classes below them respectively. The term Anuloma denotes straight and regular hair, which in India characterises the Aryan stock. After these came six Pratilōma castes, originating in reverse order from Brahman and Kshatriya women by fathers of the inferior classes. The third among these was the Chandāla, the offspring of Shudra fathers by Brahman women. The Chandālas, or slaves, were sub-divided into fifteen classes, none of which might intermarry, a rule still strictly observed. The two last, and lowest of the fifteen classes, are the Kapata or rag-wearing, and the Soppu or leaf-wearing Koragas. Such is the account given by Brahman chroniclers; but the probability is that these lowest slave-castes are the descendants of that primitive population which the Aryan invaders from the north found occupying the soil, and, after a struggle of ages, gradually dispossessed, driving some to the hills and jungles, and reducing others to the condition of slaves. All these races are regarded by their Hindu

masters with boundless contempt, and held unspeakably unclean. This feeling seems the result and witness of times when the despised races were powerful, and to be approached as lords by their now haughty masters, and was probably intensified by struggles and uprisings, and the memory of humiliations inflicted on the ultimately successful conquerors. Evidences for this may be inferred from many curious rights and privileges, which the despised castes possess and tenaciously retain. Moreover, the contempt and loathing in which they are ordinarily held are curiously tinctured with superstitious fear, for they are believed to possess secret powers of magic and witchcraft, and influence with the old malignant deities of the soil, who can direct good or evil fortune. As an instance, if a Brahman mother's children die off when young, she calls a Koragar woman, gives her some oil, rice, and copper money, and places the surviving child in her arms. The out-caste woman, who may not at other times be touched, gives the child suck, puts on it her iron bracelets, and, if a boy, names it Koragar, if a girl, Korāpulu. She then returns it to the mother. This is believed to give a new lease of life. Again, when a man is dangerously ill, or perhaps unfortunate, he pours oil into an earthen vessel, worships it in the same way as the family god, looks at his face reflected in the oil, and puts into it a hair from his head and a nail paring from his toe. The oil is then presented to the Koragars, and the hostile gods or stars are believed to be propitiated." According to Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao,* old superstitious Hindus never venture to utter the word Koraga during the night.

* Madras Christ. Coll. Mag. III, 1885-6.

It is noted in the Manual of the South Canara district, that "all traditions unite in attributing the introduction of the Tulu Brahmins of the present day to Mayūr Varma (of the Kadamba dynasty), but they vary in details connected with the manner in which they obtained a firm footing in the land. One account says that Habāshika, chief of the Koragas, drove out Mayūr Varma, but was in turn expelled by Mayūr Varma's son, or son-in-law, Lōkāditya of Gōkarnam, who brought Brahmins from Ahi-kshētra, and settled them in thirty-two villages." Concerning the power, and eventual degradation of the Koragas, the following version of the tradition is cited by Mr. Walhouse. "When Lokadirāya, whose date is fixed by Wilks about 1450 B.C., was king of Bhanvarshe in North Canara (a place noted by Ptolemy), an invader, by name Habāshika, brought an army from above the ghauts, consisting of all the present Chandāla or slave-castes, overwhelmed that part of the country, and marched southward to Mangalore, the present capital of South Canara. The invading host was scourged with small-pox, and greatly annoyed by ants, so Habāshika moved on to Manjeshwar, a place of ancient repute, twelve miles to the south, subdued the local ruler Angarawarma, son of Virawarma, and reigned there in conjunction with his nephew; but after twelve years both died—one legend says through enchantments devised by Angarawarma; another that a neighbouring ruler treacherously proposed a marriage between his sister and Habāshika, and, on the bridegroom and his caste-men attending for the nuptials, a wholesale massacre of them all was effected. Angarawarma, then returning, drove the invading army into the jungles, where they were reduced to such extremity that they consented to become slaves, and were apportioned amongst the Brahmans and original

landholders. Some were set to watch the crops and cattle, some to cultivate, others to various drudgeries, which are still allotted to the existing slave-castes, but the Koragars, who had been raised by Habāshika to the highest posts under his government, were stripped and driven towards the sea-shore, there to be hanged, but, being ashamed of their naked condition, they gathered the leaves of the nicki bush (*Vitex Negundo*), which grows abundantly in waste places, and made small coverings for themselves in front. On this the executioners took pity on them and let them go, but condemned them to be the lowest of the low, and wear no other covering but leaves. The Koragas are now the lowest of the slave divisions, and regarded with such intense loathing and hatred that up to quite recent times one section of them, called Andē or pot Koragars, continually wore a pot suspended from their necks, into which they were compelled to spit, being so utterly unclean as to be prohibited from even spitting on the highway; and to this day their women continue to show in their leafy aprons a memorial of the abject degradation to which their whole race was doomed." It is said that in pre-British days an Andē Koraga had to take out a licence to come into the towns and villages by day. At night mere approach thereto was forbidden, as his presence would cause terrible calamity. The Koragas of those days could cook their food only in broken vessels. The name Vastra, by which one class of Koragas is called, has reference to their wearing vastra, or clothes, such as were used to shroud a dead body, and given to them in the shape of charity, the use of a new cloth being prohibited. According to another account the three divisions of the Koragas are (1) Kappada, those who wear clothes, (2) Tippi, who wear ornaments made



KORAGA.

of the cocoanut shell, and (3) Vanti, who wear a peculiar kind of large ear-ring. These three clans may eat together, but not intermarry. Each clan is divided into exogamous septs called balis, and it may be noted that some of the Koraga balis, such as Haledennaya and Kumĕrdennaya, are also found among the Māri and Mundala Holeyas.

On the subject of Koraga dress, Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao informs us that "while the males gird a piece of cloth round their loins, the females cover their waist with leaves of the forest woven together. Various reasons are assigned for this custom. According to a tradition, at the time when the Koragars had reigned, now far distant, one of these 'blacklegged' (this is usually the expression by which they are referred to during the night) demanded a girl of high birth in marriage. Being enraged at this, the upper class withheld, after the overthrow of the Koragas, every kind of dress from Koraga women, who, to protect themselves from disgrace, have since had recourse to the leaves of the forest, conceiving in the meantime that god had decreed this kind of covering." Mr. Walhouse writes* further that the Koragas wear an "apron of twigs and leaves over the buttocks. Once this was the only covering allowed them, and a mark of their deep degradation. But now, when no longer compulsory, and of no use, as it is worn over the clothes, the women still retain it, believing its disuse would be unlucky." "The Koragas," Mr. H. A. Stuart tells us,† "cover the lower part of their body with a black cloth and the upper part with a white one, and their head-dress is a cap made of the areca-nut spathe, like that worn by the Holeyas.

* Ind. Ant. X, 1881. † Manual of the South Canara district.

Their ornaments consist of brass ear-rings, an iron bracelet, and beads of bone strung on a thread and tied around their waist." The waist-belt of a Koraga, whom I saw at Udipi, was made of owl bones.

"It may," Mr. Walhouse states,* "be noted that, according to the traditional accounts, when the invading hosts under Habāshika were in their turn overthrown and subjected, they accepted slavery under certain conditions that preserved to them some shadow of right. Whilst it was declared that they should be for ever in a state of servitude, and be allowed a meal daily, but never the means of providing for the next day's meal. Each slave was ascripted to his master under the following forms, which have come down to our days, and were observed in the purchase or transfer of slaves within living memory. The slave having washed, anointed himself with oil, and put on a new cloth, his future owner took a metal plate, filled it with water, and dropped in a gold coin, which the slave appropriated after drinking up the water. The slave then took some earth from his future master's estate, and threw it on the spot he chose for his hut, which was given over to him with all the trees thereon. When land was transferred, the slaves went with it, and might also be sold separately. Occasionally they were presented to a temple for the service of the deity. This was done publicly by the master approaching the temple, putting some earth from before its entrance into the slave's mouth, and declaring that he abjured his rights, and transferred them to the deity within. Rules were laid down, with the Hindoo passion for regulating small matters, not only detailing what work the slaves should do, but what allowances of food

* Journ. Anthrop. Inst. IV, 1875.

they should receive, and what presents on certain festival occasions they should obtain from, or make to the master. On marriages among themselves, they prostrated themselves before the master and obtained his consent, which was accompanied with a small present of money and rice. The marriage over, they again came before the master, who gave them betel nuts, and poured some oil on the bride's head. On the master's death, his head slave immediately shaved his hair and moustache. There was also a list of offences for which masters might punish slaves, amongst which the employment of witchcraft, or sending out evil spirits against others, expressly figures; and the punishments with which each offence might be visited are specified, the worst of which are branding and flogging with switches. There was no power of life and death, and in cases of withholding the usual allowance, or of punishments severer than prescribed, slaves might complain to the authorities."

On the subject of Koraga slavery, Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao writes that "although these slaves are in a degraded condition, yet they by no means appear to be dejected or unhappy. A male slave gets three hanis of paddy (unhusked rice) or a hani and a half of rice daily, besides a small quantity of salt. The female slave gets two hanis of paddy, and, if they be man and wife, they can easily sell a portion of the rice to procure other necessaries of life. They are also allowed one cloth each every year, and, besides, when transferred from one master to another, they get a cocoanut, a jack tree (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and a piece of land where they can sow ten or twenty seers of rice. The greater number of slaves belong to the Alia Santānam castes (inheritance in the female line), and among these people

a male slave is sold for three pagodas (fourteen rupees) and a female slave for five pagodas; whereas the few slaves who belong to the Makkala Santānam castes (inheritance in the male line) fetch five pagodas for the man slave, and three pagodas for the female. This is because the children of the latter go to the husband's master, while those of the former go to the mother's master, who has the benefit of the husband's services also. He has, however, to pay the expenses of their marriage, which amount to a pagoda and a half; and, in like manner, the master of the Makkala Santāna slave pays two pagodas for his marriage, and gets possession of the female slave and her children. The master has the power of hiring out his slave, for whose services he receives annually about a mura of rice, or forty seers. They are also mortgaged for three or four pagodas."

For the marriages of the Koragas, Mr. Walhouse informs us that "Sunday is an auspicious day, though Monday is for the other slave castes. The bridegroom and bride, after bathing in cold water, sit on a mat in the former's house, with a handful of rice placed before them. An old man presides, takes a few grains of rice and sprinkles on their heads, as do the others present, first the males and then the females. The bridegroom then presents two silver coins to his wife, and must afterwards give six feasts to the community." At these feasts every Koraga is said to vie with his neighbour in eating and drinking. "Though amongst the other slave castes divorce is allowed by consent of the community, often simply on grounds of disagreement, and the women may marry again, with the Koragars marriage is indissoluble, but a widow is entitled to re-marriage, and a man may have a second, and even third wife, all living with him."

Concerning the ceremonies observed on the birth of a child, Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao writes that "after a child is born, the mother (as among Hindoos) is unholy, and cannot be touched or approached. The inmates take leave of the koppu for five nights, and depend on the hospitality of their friends, placing the mother under the sole charge of a nurse or midwife. On the sixth night the master of the koppu calls his neighbours, who can hardly refuse to oblige him with their presence. The mother and the child are then given a tepid bath, and this makes them holy. Members of each house bring with them a seer of rice, half a seer of cocoanut oil, and a cocoanut. The woman with the baby is seated on a mat—her neighbour's presents before her in a flat basket. The oldest man present consults with his comrades as to what name will best suit the child. A black string is then tied round the waist of the baby. The rice, which comes in heaps from the neighbours, is used for dinner on the occasion, and the cocoanuts are split into two pieces, the lower half being given to the mother of the child, and the upper half the owner. This is the custom followed when the baby is a male one; in case of a female child, the owner receives the upper half, leaving the lower half for the mother. Koragars were originally worshippers of the sun, and they are still called after the names of the days of the week—as Aita (a corruption of Aditya, or the sun); Toma (Sōma, or the moon); Angara (Mangala); Gurva (Jupiter); Tanya (Shani, or Saturn); Tukra (Shukra, or Venus). They have no separate temples for their God, but a place beneath a kāsaracana tree (*Strychnos Nux-vomica*) is consecrated for the worship of the deity which is exclusively their own, and is called Kata. Worship in honour of this deity is usually performed in the months of May, July, or

October. Two plantain leaves are placed on the spot, with a heap of boiled rice mixed with turmeric. As is usual in every ceremony observed by a Koragar, the senior in age takes the lead, and prays to the deity to accept the offering and be satisfied. But now they have, by following the example of Bants and Sudras, exchanged their original object of worship for that of Bhutas (demons)."

On the subject of the religion of the Koragas, Mr. Walhouse states that "like all the slave castes and lower races, the Koragars worship Mari Amma, the goddess presiding over small-pox, the most dreadful form of Parvati, the wife of Siva. She is the most popular deity in Canara, represented under the most frightful form, and worshipped with bloody rites. Goats, buffaloes, pigs, fowls, etc., are slaughtered at a single blow by an Asādi, one of the slave tribes from above the ghauts. Although the Koragars, in common with all slaves, are looked upon as excommunicated and unfit to approach any Brahminical temple or deity, they have adopted the popular Hindoo festivals of the Gokalastami or Krishna's birthday, and the Chowti. In the latter, the preliminaries and prayers must be performed by a virgin." Concerning these festivals, Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao gives the following details. "The Koragars have no fixed feasts exclusively of their own, but for a long time they have been observing those of the Hindus. Of these two are important. One is Gōkula Ashtami, or the birthday of Krishna, and the other is the Chowti or Pooliyar feast. The latter is of greater importance than the former. The former is a holy day of abstinence and temperance, while the latter is associated with feasting and merry-making, and looks more like a gala-day set apart for anything but religious performance. On the Ashtami some cakes of

black gram are made in addition to the usual dainties. The services of Bacchus are called in aid, and the master of the koppu invites his relatives and friends. A regular feasting commences, when the master takes the lead, and enjoys the company of his guests by seating himself in their midst. They are made to sit on the floor crosswise with a little space intervening between every guest, who pays strict regard to all the rules of decency and rank. To keep up the distinction of sexes, females are seated in an opposite row. The host calls upon some of his intimates or friends to serve on the occasion. The first dish is curry, the second rice ; and cakes and dainties come in next. The butler Koragar serves out to the company the food for the banquet, while the guests eat it heartily. If one of them lets so much as a grain of rice fall on his neighbour's plate, the whole company ceases eating. The offender is at once brought before the guests, and charged with having spoiled the dinner. He is tried there and then, and sentenced to pay a fine that will cover the expenses of another banquet. In case of resistance to the authority of the tribunal, he is excommunicated and abandoned by his wife, children and relatives. No one dare touch or speak to him. A plea of poverty of course receives a kind consideration. The offender is made to pay a small sum as a fine, which is paid for him by a well-to-do Koragar. To crown the feast, a large quantity of toddy finds its way into the midst of the company. A small piece of dry areca leaf sewed together covers the head of a Koragar, and forms for him his hat. This hat he uses as a cup, which contains a pretty large quantity of liquid. A sufficient quantity is poured into their cup, and if, in pouring, a drop finds its way to the ground, the butler is sure to undergo the same penalty that attaches itself to any

irregularity in the dinner as described above. After the banquet, some male members of the group join in a dance to the pipe and drum, while others are stimulated by the intoxicating drink into frisking and jumping about. To turn to the other festival. The inmates of the house are required to fast the previous night—one and all of them—and on the previous day flesh or drink is not allowed. The next morning before sunrise, a virgin bathes, and smears cowdung over a part of the house. The place having been consecrated, a new basket, specially made for the occasion, is placed on that spot. It contains a handful of beaten rice, two plantains, and two pieces of sugar-cane. The basket is then said to contain the god of the day, whom the sugar-cane represents, and the spot is too holy to be approached by man or woman. A common belief which they hold, that the prayers made by a virgin are duly responded to on account of her virgin purity, does not admit of the worship being conducted by any one else. The girl adorns the basket with flowers of the forest, and prays for the choicest blessings on the inmates of the house all the year round.

A Koraga woman, when found guilty of adultery, is said to be treated in the following extraordinary way. If her paramour is of low caste similar to herself, he has to marry her. But, in order to purify her for the ceremony, he has to build a hut, and put the woman inside. It is then set on fire, and the woman escapes as best she can to another place where the same performance is gone through, and so on until she has been burnt out seven times. She is then considered once more an honest woman, and fit to be again married. According to Mr. Walhouse, "a row of seven small huts is built on a river-bank, set fire to, and the offender made to run over the burning sticks and ashes as a penance." A similar

form of ordeal has been described as occurring among the Bākutas of South Canara by Mr. Stuart. "When a man is excommunicated, he must perform a ceremony called yēlu halli sudodu, which means burning seven villages, in order to re-enter the caste. For this ceremony, seven small booths are built, and bundles of grass are piled against them. The excommunicated man has then to pass through these huts one after the other, and, as he does so, the headman sets fire to the grass" (*cf.* Koyi). It is suggested by Mr. R. E. Enthoven that the idea seems to be "a rapid representation of seven existences, the outcast regaining his status after seven generations have passed without further transgression. The parallel suggested is the law of Manu that seven generations are necessary to efface a lapse from the law of endogamous marriage."

Of death ceremonies Mr. Walhouse tells us that "on death the bodies of all the slave castes used to be burnt, except in cases of death from small-pox. This may have been to obviate the pollution of the soil by their carcases when their degradation was deepest, but now, and from long past, burial is universal. The master's permission is still asked, and, after burial, four balls of cooked rice are placed on the grave, possibly a trace of the ancient notion of supplying food to the ghost of the deceased." A handful is said * to be "removed from the grave on the sixteenth day after burial, and buried in a pit. A stone is erected over it, on which some rice and toddy are placed as a last offering to the departed soul which is then asked to join its ancestors."

"It may," Mr. Walhouse writes, "be noted that the Koragars alone of all the slave or other castes eat the

* Manual of the South Canara district.

flesh of alligators (crocodiles), and they share with one or two other divisions of the slaves a curious scruple or prejudice against carrying any four-legged animal, dead or alive. This extends to anything with four legs, such as chairs, tables, cots, etc., which they cannot be prevailed upon to lift unless one leg be removed. As they work as coolies, this sometimes produces inconvenience. A somewhat similar scruple obtains among the Bygas of Central India, whose women are not allowed to sit or lie on any four-legged bed or stool." Like the Koragas, the Bākudas of South Canara "will not carry a bedstead unless the legs are first taken off, and it is said that this objection rests upon a supposed resemblance between the four-legged cot and the four-legged ox." *

Of the language spoken by the Koragars, Mr. Ullal Raghvendra Rao states that "it is a common belief that the Koragar has a peculiar dialect generally spoken by him at his koppu. He may be induced to give an account of his feasts, his gods, his family, but a word about his dialect will frighten him out of his wits. Generally polite and well-behaved, he becomes impolite and unmannerly when questioned about his dialect." "All the Hindoos," Mr. Walhouse writes, "believe that the Koragars have a language of their own, understood only by themselves, but it seems doubtful whether this is anything more than an idiom, or slang." A vocabulary of the Koraga dialect is contained in the South Canara Manual (1895).

Korama.—*See* Korava.

Korava.—Members of this nomad tribe, which permeates the length of the Indian peninsula, through countries where many languages and dialects are spoken, are likely to be known by different names in different

---

* Manual of the South Canara district.

localities, and this is the case. They are known as Korava from the extreme south to the north of the North Arcot district, where they are called Koracha or Korcha, and in the Ceded Districts they become Yerukala or Yerakala. In Calcutta they have been traced practising as quack doctors, and assuming Marātha names, or adding terminations to their own, which suggest that they belong to a caste in the south higher in the social scale than they really do. Some Koravas pass for Vellālas, calling themselves Agambadiar Vellālas with the title Pillai. Others call themselves Palli, Kavarai, Idaiyan, Reddi, etc.* As railways spread over the country, they readily adapted themselves to travelling by them, and the opportunities afforded for going quickly far from the scene of a recently committed crime, or for stealing from sleeping passengers, were soon availed of. In 1899, the Superintendent of Government Railways reported that "the large organization of thieves, commonly called Kepmari Koravas (though they never call themselves so), use the railway to travel far. Some of them are now settled at Cuttack, where they have set up as native doctors, whose speciality is curing piles. Some are at Midnapūr, and are going on to Calcutta, and there were some at Puri some time ago. It is said that a gang of them has gone recently to Tinnevelly, and taken up their abode near Sermadēvi, calling themselves Servaikars. One morning, in Tinnevelly, while the butler in a missionary's house was attending to his duties, an individual turned up with a fine fowl for sale. The butler, finding that he could purchase it for about half the real price, bought it, and showed it to his wife with no small pride in his ability in

* M. Paupa Rao Naidu. History of Railway Thieves.

making a bargain. But he was distinctly crestfallen when his wife pointed out that it was his own bird, which had been lost on the previous night. The seller was a Korava."

In 1903, a gang of Koravas, travelling in the guise of pūjāris, was arrested at Puri. The Police discovered that a warrant remained unexecuted against one of them, who had been concerned in a dacoity case in North Arcot many years previously. The report of the case states that "cognate with the Kepmaries is a class of Korava pūjāris (as they call themselves in their own village), who, emanating from one small hamlet in the Tanjore district, are spread more or less all over India. There are, or were until the other day, and probably are still some of them in Cuttack, Balasore, Midnapūr, Ahmedabad, Patna, Bombay, Secunderabad, and other places. One of them attained a high position in Bombay. Their ostensible profession is that of curing piles and fistulas, but it is noticeable that, sooner or later after their taking up their abode at any place, the Kepmaries are to be found somewhere near, and the impression, which is not quite a certainty but very nearly so, is that they play the convenient rôle of receivers of property stolen by the Kepmaries." Kēpmari is regarded as a very strong term of abuse, indicating, as it does, a rogue of the worst character. In the southern districts, the Kāsukkar Chettis and Shānāns are said to be very much trusted by the Koravas in the disposal of property.

It is noted by Mr. H. A. Stuart * that the Koravas or Yerukalas are a vagrant tribe found throughout the Presidency, and in many parts of India. In the Telugu

---

* Madras Census Report, 1891.



YERUKALAS.

country they are called Yerukalavāndlu or Korachavāndlu, but they always speak of themselves as Kurru, and there is not the slightest room for the doubt that has been expressed regarding the identity of the Koravas and Yerukalas. Several derivations of Yerukala have been proposed by Wilson and others. It has been suggested, for example, that yeru is connected with erra, meaning red. In Telugu Yerukalavāndlu would mean fortune-tellers, and Dr. Oppert suggests that this is the origin of the name Yerukala. He says* "it is highly probable that the name and the occupation of the fortune-telling Kuruvāndlu or Kuluvāndlu induced the Telugu people to call this tribe Yerukulavāndlu. Dr. Oppert further connects Kurru with the root ku, a mountain; and, in a Tamil work of the ninth century,† Kurru or Kura (Kuramagal) is given as the name of a hill tribe." A strong argument in favour of the caste name being connected with the profession of fortune-telling is afforded by the fact that women go about the streets, calling out "Yeruko, amma, yeruku," *i.e.*, prophecies, mother, prophecies. The Kuravas are, Mr. Francis writes,‡ "a gipsy tribe found all over the Tamil country, but chiefly in Kurnool, Salem, Coimbatore and South Arcot. Kuravas have usually been treated as being the same as the Yerukalas. Both castes are wandering gipsies, both live by basket-making and fortune-telling, both speak a corrupt Tamil, and both may have sprung from one original stock. It is noteworthy in this connection that the Yerukalas are said to call one another Kurru or Kura. But their names are not used as interchangeable in the districts where each is found, and there seem to be no real differences between

* Madras Journ. Lit: and Science, 1888–89. † Tirumurukairuppadai.

‡ Madras Census Report, 1901.

the two bodies. They do not intermarry, or eat together. The Kuravas are said to tie a piece of thread soaked in turmeric water round the bride's neck at weddings, while Yerukalas use a necklace of black beads. The Yerukalas have a tradition that those who went to fetch the tāli and pipe never returned, and they consequently use black beads as a substitute for the tāli, and a bell for the pipe. The Kuravas worship Subramanya, the son of Siva, while the Yerukalas worship Vishnu in the form of Venkateswara and his wife Lakshmi. It may be noted that, in a very early Sanskrit drama, the Brāhman thief mocks Subramanya as being the patron saint of thieves. The Kuravas treat the gentler sex in a very casual manner, mortgaging or selling their wives without compunction, but the Yerukalas are particular about the reputation of their womankind, and consider it a serious matter if any of them return home without an escort after sunset. The statistics of this year accordingly show Yerukalas separately from Koravas. The reports from the various districts, however, give such discrepant accounts of both castes, that the matter is clearly in need of further enquiry." There is no district in the Madras Presidency or elsewhere, where both Koravas and Yerukalas live, unless it be the smallest possible corner of the Coimbatore district bordering on the south-east of Mysore, for the name Korcha intervenes; and, for a wide strip of country including the north of the North Arcot district and south of the Cuddapah district, the Korava is known as a Korcha, and the Census Superintendent, in common with other authorities, has admitted these names to be synonymous. It is in the north of the Cuddapah district that the Yerukalas first appear in co-existence with the Korcha. The Korcha being admitted on all sides to be the same

as the Korava, our doubt regarding the identity of the Korava with the Yerukala will be disposed of if we can establish the fact that the Korcha and the Yerukala are the same. The Rev. J. Cain, writing * about the Yerukalas of the Godāvari district, states that "among themselves they call each other Kuluvāru, but the Telugu people call them Erakavāru or Erakalavāru, and this name has been derived from the Telugu word eruka, which means knowledge or acquaintance, as they are great fortune-tellers."

According to Balfour,† the Koravas, or a certain section of them, *i.e.*, the Kunchi Koravas, were known as Yerkal Koravar, and they called the language they spoke Yerkal. The same authority, writing of the Yerkalwadu, alludes to them as Kurshiwanloo, and goes on to say that they style themselves Yerkal, and give the same appellation to the language in which they hold communication. The word Yerkal here undoubtedly stands for Yerukala, and Kurshi for Korcha. It is evident from this, supported by authorities such as Wilson, Campbell, Brown and Shortt, that the doubt mentioned by the Census Superintendent in regard to the identity of the Yerukala and Korava had not arisen when the Cyclopædia of India was published, and it is the subsequent reports of later investigators that are responsible for it. The divergencies of practices reported must be reckoned with, and accounted for. They may be due to local customs existing in widely separated areas. It is contended that the Koravas and Yerukalas do not intermarry or eat together. A Korava, who has made a permanent home in a village in the south, if asked whether he would marry a Yerukala, would most

* Indian Antiquity, IX, 1880.

† Cyclopædia of India.

certainly answer in the negative, probably having never heard of such a person. A circular letter, submitted to a number of Police Inspectors in several districts, produced the same sort of discrepant information complained of by the Census Superintendent. But one Inspector extracted from his notes the information that, in 1895, marriages took place between the southern Koravas of a gang from the Madura district and the Yerukalas of the Cuddapah district; and, further, that the son of one of a gang of Yerukalas in the Anantapur district married a Korcha girl from a gang belonging to the Mysore State. The consensus of opinion also goes to prove that they will eat together. Yerukalas undoubtedly place a string of black beads as a tāli round the bride's neck on marriage occasions, and the same is used by the Koravas. Information concerning the use of a turmeric-dyed string came from only one source, namely, Hosūr in the Salem district, and it was necessary even here for the string to be furnished with a round bottu, which might be a bead. A plain turmeric-soaked thread appears to be more the exception than the rule. Yerukalas are both Vaishnavites and Saivites, and a god worshipped by any one gang cannot be taken as a representative god for the whole class. Yerukalas may treat their womankind better than the southern Koravas, but this is only a matter of degree, as the morals of both are slack. The Yerukalas, occupying, as they do, the parched centre of the peninsula, more frequently devastated by famine than the localities occupied by the Koravas, may have learnt in a hard school the necessity of taking care of their wives; for, if they allowed them to pass to another man, and a drought ruined his crop and killed the cattle, he would find it hard to procure another, the probability being that the price of wives

rises in a common ratio with other commodities in a time of scarcity.

From the accounts given by them, it appears that the Koravas claim to have originated in mythological ages. The account varies slightly according to the locality, but the general outlines agree more or less with the story related in the Bhāgavātham. The purōhits, or priests, are the safest guides, and it was one of them who told the following story, culled, as he admitted, from the Sāstras and the Rāmāyana. When the great Vēnudu, son of Agneswathu, who was directly descended from Brahma, ruled over the universe, he was unable to procure a son and heir to the throne, and, when he died, his death was looked on as an irreparable misfortune. His body was preserved. The seven ruling planets sat in solemn conclave, and consulted as to what they should do. Finally they agreed to create a being from the right thigh of the deceased Vēnudu, and they accordingly fashioned and gave life to Nishudu. But their work was not successful, for Nishudu turned out to be not only deformed in body, but repulsively ugly in face. It was agreed at another meeting of the planets that he was not a fit person to be placed on the throne. So they set to work again, and created a being from the right shoulder of Vēnudu, and their second effort was crowned with success. They called the second creation Proothu Chakravarthi, and, as he gave general satisfaction, he was placed on the throne. This supersession naturally caused the first-born Nishudu to be discontented, and he sought a lonely place, in which he communed with the gods, begging of them the reason why they had created him if he was not to rule. The gods explained that he could not now be placed on the throne, as Chakravarthi had already been installed, but

that he should be a ruler over forests. In this capacity Nishudu begat the Bōyas, Chenchus, Yānādis, and Koravas. The Bōyas were his legitimate children, but the others were all illegitimate. It is because Nishudu watched in solemn silence to know his creator that some of his offspring called themselves Yerukalas (yeruka, to know). Another story explains the name Korava. When the princes Dharmarāja and Duryodana were at variance, the former, to avoid strife, went into voluntary exile. A woman who loved him set out in search of him, but, through fear of being identified, disguised herself as a fortune-teller. In this manner she found him, and their offspring became known as Koravas, from kuru, fortune-telling.

The appellation Koracha or Korcha appears to be of later date than Korava, and is said to be derived from the Hindustani kori (sly), korri nigga (sly look) becoming corrupted into Korcha. Whenever this name was applied to them, they had evidently learnt their calling thoroughly, and the whole family, in whatever direction its branches spread, established a reputation for cunning in snaring animals or birds, or purloining other peoples' goods, until to-day their names are used for the purpose of insulting abuse in the course of a quarrel. Thus a belligerant might call the other a thieving Yerukala, or ask, in tones other than polite, if he belongs to a gang of Korchas. In the Tamil country, a man is said to kurakenju, or cringe like a Korava, and another allusion to their dishonesty is kurapasāngu, to cheat like a Korava. The proverb " Kuruvan's justice is the ruin of the family " refers to the endless nature of their quarrels, the decision of which will often occupy the headmen for weeks together.

In communicating among themselves, the Koravas and Yerukalas speak a corrupt polyglot, in which the words



KORAVA.

derived from several languages bear little resemblance to the original. Their words appear to be taken chiefly from Tamil, Telugu, and Canarese. A short vocabulary of the Yerukala language has been published by the Rev. J. Cain.* The Yerukalas call this language Oodra, which seems to stand for gibberish or thieves' slang, or, as they explain, something very hard to understand. Oriya or Oodra is the language of the districts of Ganjam and Orissa. The word Oriya means north, and the fact that the Yerukalas call their language Oodra would seem to confirm their belief that they are a northern tribe. The wanderers always know more than one language colloquially, and are able to make themselves understood by the people of the country through which they may be passing. Those who have settled in villages invariably speak the language of the locality. When talking among themselves, they call a Brāhman Thanniko Koravan, or the bathing Korava. They consider the Brāhmans to be more cunning than themselves, and, as they are fond of bathing to remove pollution, they have given them this nickname.

A detailed account of the Korava slang and patois has been published by Mr. F. Fawcett, Deputy Inspector-General of Police,† from whose note thereon the following examples are taken :—

Constable ...	Erthalakayadu.	Red-headed man.
Head constable.	Kederarilu.	The man who rides on an ass.
Taking bribe ...	Kalithindrathu.	Eating rāgi food.
Toddy	Uggu perumalu ollaithanni.	White water, or good water.
Fowls	Rendukal Naidu.	The Naidu of two legs.
Mussalmans ...	Arthupottavungo.	Those who have cut (circumcised).

* *Loc. cit.*

† Note on Koravas, 1908.

Pariah	Ūtharalu keenjalu.	The man that pipes.
Butcher's knife ...	Elamayarathe bottarathu.	That for striking those that graze leaves.
Rupees	Pālakanna.	Milk eyes.
	Ollakelluka.	White pebbles.

Korava society is purely patriarchal, and, in whatever division or sept of the caste a Korava may be born, he has to subordinate himself to the will of his elders or the leaders of his particular gang. The head of a gang is called the Peru Manusan or Beriya Manasan (big man). He is selected principally because of his age, intelligence, and the influence he commands amongst the members of the gang. It is a post which carries with it no remuneration whatever, but the holder presides at all consultations, and is given the position of honour at all social functions.

Concerning the caste government, Mr. Fawcett writes that "the kulam or caste assembly adjudicates claims, inflicts penalties, ejects individuals from the caste, or readmits them thereto. Free drinking of toddy at the expense of one of the parties accompanies every caste assembly. It is the aggrieved party who gives notice for assembly of the kulam. The disputants join hands, thereby indicating to the kulam that their dispute should be decided by them. Each pays one rupee. The kulam may decide the dispute at once, or adjourn for further consideration at any time. The next meeting is called the second joining of hands, when each pays one rupee, as before, to be spent in toddy. A man who fails to attend when the kulam has been convened loses his caste absolutely. If there is a third adjournment, that is a third joining of hands, each side pays Rs. $3\frac{1}{2}$ for toddy, to keep the kulam in good spirits. As this is always the final adjournment, the decision is sometimes

arrived at by means of an ordeal. An equal quantity of rice is placed in two pots of equal weight having a quantity of water, and there is an equal quantity of firewood. The judges satisfy themselves most carefully as to quantity, weights, and so on. The water is boiled, and the man whose rice boils first is declared to be the winner of the dispute. The loser is to recoup the winner all his expenses. It sometimes happens that both pots boil at the same time; then a coin is to be picked out of a pot containing boiling oil. There is yet another method of settling disputes about money. The amount claimed is brought by one party, and placed beside an idol. The claimant is then asked to take it, and, should nothing unpleasant happen to him or to his family afterwards, he is declared to have made out his claim. The kulam has nothing whatever to do with planning the execution of offences, but is sometimes called upon to decide about the division of plunder, as, for instance, when any member of a criminal expedition improperly secretes something for himself. But they engage vakils (pleaders) for defending members of the gang who are charged with a criminal offence, whether they have been concerned in it or not."

There are a great many classes of Koravas, most of them obtaining their names from the particular occupations they have followed as an ostensible means of livelihood for many generations. But, whatever they may call themselves, they all, according to Mr. Mainwaring, fall within three divisions, viz.:—

1. Sakai, Sampathi, Sāthupadi.
2. Kāvadi or Gujjula.
3. Dēvarakonda, Mendrakutti, or Menapadi.

The members of the first two divisions are pure Koravas, the legitimate descendants of Koravas who

have never married outside the caste, whereas the third division represents and includes the mixed marriages, and the offspring thereof. The Koravas receive into their ranks members of castes other than Paraiyans (including Mālas and Mādigas), Yānādis, Mangalas, and Tsākalas. The ceremony of introduction into the Korava community consists in burning the tongue with a piece of gold. The Koravas have a strong objection to taking food touched by Mēdaras, because, in their professional occupation of doing wicker-work, they use an awl which resembles the tool used by Mādigas in shoe-making. The Koravas are said to be divided into two large families, which they call Pōthu and Pēnti, meaning male and female. All the families included in the first division noted above are Pōthu, and those in the second Pēnti. The families in the third division, being the product of mixed marriages, and the position of females being a lowly one, they are also considered to be Pēnti. The Pōthu section is said to have arisen from men going in search of brides for themselves, and the Pēntis from men going in search of husbands for their daughters. When a Korava, male or female, wishes to marry, a partner must be sought in a division other than their own. For example, a Korava of the first division is bound to marry a female belonging to the second or third division, who, after marriage, belongs to her husband's division. This may be a little hard on the women of the first division, because they are bound to descend in the social scale. However, their daughters can rise by marrying into the first division. For the purpose of religious ceremonies, each division has fixed duties. The members of the first division have the right of decorating the god, and dressing him in his festival attire. Those of the second division carry the god and the regalia in procession, and

burn incense, and those of the third drag the temple car, and sing and shout during its progress. For this reason, it is said, they are sometimes called Bandi (cart).

"The major divisions," Mr. Paupa Rao Naidu writes, "are four in number, and according to their gradation they are Sāthepāti, Kāvadi, Mānapāti, Mendragutti. They are all corrupted Tamil words.

"1. Sāthepāti is a corruption of Sāthupādi, which means adorning a Hindu deity with flowers, jewels and vestments.

"2. Kāvadi, meaning a pole carried on the shoulders with two baskets pendant from its ends, in which are contained offerings for a deity or temple.

"3. Mānapāti is a corruption of Mānpadi, which means singing in praise of god, when He is worshipped in a temple.

"4. Mendragutti is a corruption of Menrikutti, which means stitching a pair of shoes, and presenting them to the temple—a custom still prevalent at Tirupati and other important shrines.

"Of these four divisions, the first two are, or rather were, considered superior to the other two, a Kāvadi man being styled Pōthuvādu (man), and a Sāthepāti man Penti (female)."

A still further classification of divisions and sub-divisions is given by Mr. F. S. Mullaly.* I am informed by Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao that, in the Vizagapatam district, the Yerukalas are divided into Pattapu or Oddē, and Thurpu (eastern). Of these, the former, when they are prosperous, live in tiled houses, while the latter live in huts. Pattapu women wear brass bangles on both wrists, and Thurpu women brass bangles on the right

---

* Notes on Criminal Classes of the Madras Presidency.

wrist, and glass bangles on the left. The former throw the end of their cloth over the left shoulder, and the latter over the right.

It is recorded, in the Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly district, that "the Kuravans are divided into a number of endogamous sections, of which the Īna Kuravans and the Kāvalkāran Kuravans are the most criminal, especially the latter. The latter are also called the Marasa, Mondu, and Kādukutti Kuravans. In dress and appearance the Nāmakkal Kuravans are said to be superior to those of Karūr, and to look like well-dressed Vellālans or Pallis. They are peculiar in wearing long ear-rings. They are also said to be much better thieves than the others, and to dislike having a Karūr Kuravan when breaking into a house, for fear he might wake the household by his clumsiness."

As examples of intipēru, or exogamous septs, the following, which were given by Uppu Yerukalas, may be cited:—

Dāsari, Vaishnavite mendicant.
Sukka, star.
Kampa, bush of thorns.
Āvula, cows.
Thoka, tail.
Kānaga (*Pongamia glabra*).
Bandi, cart.
Gajjala, small bell.
Mogili (*Pandanus fascicularis*).
Uyyāla, swing.
Rāgala, rāgi grain.
Pūla, flowers.
Katāri, dagger.
Ambojala, lotus.
Samudrāla, sea.
Venkatagiri, a town.

"A knowledge," Mr. Fawcett writes, "of these house or sept names may be useful in order to establish a man's identity, as a Koravar, who is generally untruthful as to his own name, is seldom if ever so as regards his house or sept name, and his father's name. He considers it shameful to lie about his parentage, 'to be born to one, and yet to give out the name of another.'

Totemism of some kind evidently exists, but it is rather odd that it has not always any apparent connection with the sept or house name. Thus, the totem of persons of the Konēti sept is horse-gram (kollu in Tamil), which they hold in veneration, and will not touch, eat, or use in any way. The totem of the Samudrāla sept is the conch shell, which likewise will not be used by those of the sept in any manner. It may be noted that persons of the Rameswari sept will not eat tortoises, while those of the Konēti sept are in some manner obliged to do so on certain occasions."

As regards names for specific occupations among the Koravas, the Bīdar or nomad Koravas originally carried merchandise in the form of salt, tamarinds, jaggery (crude sugar or molasses), leaves of the curry leaf plant (*Murraya Kœnigii*) from place to place on pack-bullocks or donkeys. The leaves were in great demand, and those who brought them round for sale were called in Tamil Karuvaipillai, and in Telugu Karepāku, after the commodity which they carried. This is a common custom in India, and when driving through the bazār, one may hear, for example, an old woman carrying a bundle of wood addressed as firewood. "Kāvadi" will be screamed at a man carrying a pole (kāvadi) with baskets, etc., suspended from it, who got in the way of another. The section of Koravas who carried salt inland from the coast became known as Uppu (salt) Koravas. Another large class are the Thubba, Dhubbai, or Dhabbai (split bamboo) Koravas, who restrict their wanderings to the foot of hill ranges, where bamboos are obtainable. With these they make baskets for the storage of grain, for carrying manure at the bottom of carts, and various fancy articles. In the Kurnool district, the Yerukalas will only cut bamboos at the time of the new moon, as they are then

supposed to be free from attacks by boring weevils, and they do certain pūja (worship) to the goddess Malalamma, who presides over the bamboos. In the Nallamalai forests, the Yerukalas do not split the bamboo into pieces and remove the whole, but take off only a very thin strip consisting of the outer rind. The strips are made up into long bundles, which can be removed by donkeys. There is extreme danger of fire, because the inner portions of the bamboos, left all over the forest, are most inflammable.* Instead of splitting the bamboos in the forest, and leaving behind a lot of combustible material, the Yerukalas now have to purchase whole bamboos, and take them outside the forest to split them. The members of a gang of these Yerukalas, who came before me at Nandyāl, were each carrying a long split bamboo wand as an occupational insigne. A further important section is that of the Kunchu or Kunchil Koravas, who gather roots in the jungle, and make them into long brushes which are used by weavers. The Koravas have a monopoly in their manufacture, and take pride in making good brushes. These Kunchu Koravas are excellent shikāris (hunters), and snare antelope, partridges, duck, quail, and other game with great skill. For the purpose of shooting antelopes, or of getting close enough to the young ones to catch them after a short run, they use a kind of shield made of dried twigs ragged at the edges, which looks like an enormous wind-blown bundle of grass. When they come in sight of a herd of antelopes, they rest one edge of the shield on the ground, and, sitting on their heels behind it, move it slowly forward towards the herd until they get sufficiently close to dash at the young ones, or shoot the

---

* Forest Inspection Report, 1896.

grown-up animals. The antelopes are supposed to mistake the shield for a bush, and to fail to notice its gradual approach. They capture duck and teal largely at night, and go to the rice fields below a tank (pond or lake), in which the crop is young, and the ground consequently not entirely obscured. This would be a likely feeding-ground, or traces of duck having fed there on the previous night might be noticed. They peg a creeper from one bund (mud embankment) to another, parallel to the tank bund, four inches above the water in the field. From this they suspend a number of running loops made of sinews drawn from the legs of sheep or goats or from the hind-legs of hares, the lower ends of the loops touching the mud under water. If the duck or teal come to feed, they are sure to be caught, and fall victims to the slip noose. "The Kuntsu (Kunchu) Korachas," Mr. Francis tells us,* "catch small birds by liming twigs or an arrangement of bits of bamboo with a worm hung inside it, or by setting horse-hair nooses round the nests. Quails they capture by freely snaring a piece of ground, and then putting a quail in a cage in the middle of it, to lure the birds towards the snare. They also catch them, and partridges too, by driving the bevy towards a collapsible net. To do this, they cover themselves with a dark blanket, conceal their heads in a kind of big hat made of hair, feathers and grass, and stalk the birds from a bullock trained to the work, very gradually driving them into the net. They also occasionally capture black-buck (antelope) by sending a tame buck with nooses on his horns to fight with a wild one. The latter speedily gets his horns entangled in the nooses, and is easily secured." Sometimes the Kunchu

* Gazetteer of the Bellary district.

Korava begs in villages, dragging about with him a monkey, while the females earn a livelihood by tattooing, which occupation, known as pricking with green, has gained for them the name of Pacchai (green) Kutti. The patterns used in tattooing by a Korava woman, whom I interviewed, were drawn in a note-book, and consisted of fishes, scorpions, a fortress, five-storeyed house, conventional designs, etc. The patterns were drawn on the skin, with great dexterity and skill in freehand drawing, by means of a blunt stick dipped in a mixture of a lamp-black, lamp-oil, and turmeric contained in a half cocoanut shell. The pattern is pricked in with a bundle of four or five needles tied together. The needles and drawing-stick were kept in a hollow bamboo, and the tattooing mixture in the scooped out fruits of the bael (*Ægle Marmelos*) and palmyra palm (*Borassus flabellifer*). For tattooing an entire upper extremity, at several sittings, the Korava woman would be paid from eight to twelve annas, or receive food-grains in lieu of money. The hot weather is said to be more favourable for the operation than the cold season, as the swelling after it is less. To check this, lamp-oil, turmeric, and leaves of the avarai plant (*Dolichos Lablab*) are applied.

Concerning the Pacchaikuttis, or, as they are also called, Gadde (soothsayers), Mr. Paupa Rao Naidu writes that "the women start with a basket and a winnowing basket or tray into a village, proclaiming their ostensible profession of tattooing and soothsaying, which they do for grain or money. When unfortunate village women, who always lose children or who often fall ill, see these Gadde women moving about, they call them into their houses, make them sit, and, pouring some grain into their baskets, ask them about their past

misery and future lot. These women, who are sufficiently trained to speak in suitable language, are clever enough to give out some yarns in equivocal terms, so that the anxious women, who hope for better futurity, understand them in the light uppermost in their own minds. The Korava women will be rewarded duly, and doubly too, for they never fail to study the nature of the house all the time, to see if it offers a fair field for booty to their men."

At Srungavarapukōta in the Vizagapatam district "the local goddess, Yerakamma, is a deification of a woman who committed sati. Ballads are sung about her, which say that she was the child of Dāsari parents, and that her birth was foretold by a Yerukala woman (whence her name) who prophesied that she would have the gift of second sight. She eventually married, and one day she begged her husband not to go to his field, as she was sure he would be killed by a tiger if he did. Her husband went notwithstanding, and was slain as she had foreseen. She committed sati on the spot where her shrine still stands."*

The Ūr or village Koravas have given up their nomad life, and settled in villages of their own, or together with other communities. Many of them have attended pial schools, and can read and write to some extent. Some of them are employed in the police and salt departments, as jail warders, etc. The Ūr Korava is fast losing his individuality, and assimilating, in dress, manners and customs, the ryots among whom he dwells. In the Salem district there is a village called Koravūr, which is inhabited entirely by Koravas, who say that they were originally Uppu Koravas, but now cultivate their

---

* Gazetteer of the Vizagapatam district.

own lands, or work as agricultural labourers for the landowners. They say further that they pay an occasional visit to Madras for the purpose of replenishing their stock of coral and beads, which they sell at local shandis (markets). Some Koravas are said to buy gilded beads at Madura, and cheat unsuspecting villagers by selling them as gold. Though the Ūr Koravas are becoming civilised, they have not yet lost their desire for other men's goods, and are reported to be the curse of the Anantapur, Cuddapah, and Bellary districts, where they commit robbery, house-breaking, and theft, especially of sheep and cattle. A particularly bold sheep theft by them a few years ago is worthy of mention. The village of Singanamalla in the Anantapur district lies a few miles off the railway. It is bordered on two sides by Government forest reserves, into which the villagers regularly drove their sheep and goats to graze, in charge of small boys, in the frequent absences of the forest watcher, or when the watcher was well disposed towards them. An arrangement was made between the Koravas and a meat-supplier at Bangalore to deliver on his behalf a large number of sheep at a wayside station near Dharmāvaram, to receive which trucks had to be ready, and the transaction was purely cash. One morning, when more than a hundred sheep had been driven far into the reserve by their youthful charges, who kept more or less close together for the sake of company, a number of Koravas turned up, and represented themselves as forest watchers, captured the small boys, gagged them and tied them to trees, and drove off all the available sheep. The boys were not discovered till late at night, and the police did not get to work till the following morning, by which time the sheep were safely entrained for Bangalore.

It is noted, in the Madras Police Report, 1905–1906, that "a large number of members of the notorious Rudrapād Koracha gangs have recently been released from His Highness the Nizam's prisons, and their return will add appreciably to the difficulties of the Bellary Police."

A small class of Koravas is named Pāmula (snake), as they follow the calling of snake-charmers. In the Census Report, 1901, Pūsalavādu (seller of glass beads) and Utlavādu (makers of utlams) are given as sub-castes of Yerukala. An utlam is a hanging receptacle for pots, etc., made of palmyra fibre. In the same report, Kādukuttukiravar (those who bore a hole in the ear) and Valli Ammai Kūttam (followers of the goddess Valli Ammai) are returned as synonyms of Koravas. They claim that Valli Ammai, the wife of the god Subrahmanya, was a Korava woman. Old Tamil books refer to the Koravas as fortune-tellers to kings and queens, and priests to Subrahmanya. Some Koravas have, at times of census, returned themselves as Kūdaikatti (basket-making) Vanniyans. Balfour refers to Walaja Koravas, and states that they are musicians. They are probably identical with the Wooyaloo Koravas,* whose duty it is to swing incense, and sing before the god during a religious celebration. The same writer speaks of Bajantri or Sonai Kolawaru and Kolla and Soli Korawars, and states that they inhabit the Southern Marātha country. These names, like Thōgamallai for Koravas who come from the village of that name in the Trichinopoly district, are probably purely local. Further, the Abbé Dubois states that "the third species of Kuravers is generally known under the name of Kalla

---

* F. S. Mullaly. *Op. cit.*

Bantru, or robbers. The last Muhammadan prince who reigned over Mysore is said to have employed a regular battalion of these men in time of war, not for the purpose of fighting, but to infest the enemy's camp in the night, stealing away the horses and other necessaries of the officers, and acting as spies. They were awarded in proportion to the dexterity they displayed in these achievements, and, in time of peace, they were despatched into the various States of neighbouring princes, to rob for the benefit of their masters." It is possible that the Kaikadis of the Central Provinces are identical with Koravas, who have migrated thither.

A section of Koravas, called Koot (dancing) or Kōthee (monkey) Kaikaries, is referred to by Mr. Paupa Rao Naidu as "obtaining their living by prostitution. They also kidnap or sell children for this purpose. Some of the women of this class are thriving well in the Madras Presidency as experts in dancing. They are kept by rich people, and are called in the Telugu country Erukala Bōgamvaru, in Tamil Korava Thevidia. They also train monkeys, and show them to the public."

The household god of the Korava, which is as a rule very rudely carved, may be a representation of either Vishnu or Siva. As already noted, it is stated in the Census Report, 1901, that the Koravas worship Subrahmanya, the son of Siva, while the Yerukalas worship Vishnu in the form of Venkatēswara and his wife Lakshmi. They worship, in addition to these, Kolāpuriamma, Perumālaswāmi, and other appropriate deities, prior to proceeding on a depredatory expedition. Kolāpuriamma is the goddess of Kolhapūr, the chief town of the Native State of that name in the Bombay Presidency, who is famous in Southern India. Perumālswāmi, or Venkatēswara, is the god of Tirupati, the

great place of pilgrimage in the North Arcot district. The signs of a recent performance of worship by Koravas may prove an indication to the Police that they have been concerned in a dacoity, and act as a clue to detection thereof. They sacrifice sheep or goats once a year to their particular god on a Sunday or Tuesday, while those who worship Venkatēswara honour him on a Saturday, and break cocoanuts as an offering. All offerings presented to the gods are divided among those present, after the ceremonies have been completed. Venkatēswara is said to be sometimes represented, for the purpose of worship, by a brass vessel (kalasam) decorated with flowers, and bearing on it the Vaishnavite nāmam (sect mark). Its mouth is closed by a cocoanut, beneath which mango or betel leaves are placed. On the day appointed for the religious service, everything within the hut is thrown outside, and the floor is purified with cow-dung, and devices are drawn thereon. The brass vessel is set up, and offerings of large quantities of food are made to it. Some of this dedicated food (prasādam) must be given to all the inhabitants of the settlement. A lump of clay, squeezed into a conical shape, with a tuft of margosa (*Melia Azadirachta*) leaves does duty for Pōlēramma. In front thereof, three stones are placed. Pōlēramma may be worshipped close to, but not within, the hut. To her offerings of boiled rice (pongal) are made by fasting women. The manner in which the boiling food bubbles over from the cooking-pot is eagerly watched, and accepted as an omen for good or evil. In a note on the Coorroo, Balfour states * that "they told me that, when they pray, they construct a small pyramid of clay, which they term Māriamma,

* Madras Journ. Lit. Science, XVII, 1853.

and worship it. The women had small gold and silver ornaments suspended from cords round their necks, which they said had been supplied to them by a goldsmith, from whom they had ordered figures of Māriamma. The form represented is that of the goddess Kāli. They mentioned that they had been told by their forefathers that, when a good man dies, his spirit enters the body of some of the better animals, as that of a horse or cow, and that a bad man's spirit gives life to the form of a dog or jackal, but they did not seem to believe in it. They believe firmly, however, in the existence and constant presence of a principle of evil, who, they say, frequently appears, my informant having himself often seen it in the dusk of the evening assuming various forms, at times a cat, anon a goat, and then a dog, taking these shapes that it might approach to injure him."

The domestic god of the Koravas, in the southern districts, is said to be Sathavu, for whom a day of worship is set apart once in three or four years. The Koravas assemble, and, in an open place to the west of the village, a mud platform is erected, on which small bricks are spread. In front of the platform are placed a sickle, sticks, and arrack (liquor). Cocoanuts, plantain fruits, and rice are offered, and sheep sacrificed. Sandal and turmeric are poured over the bricks, and camphor is burnt. The proceedings terminate with a feast.

The presiding goddess of the criminal profession of the Koravas is stated by Mr. M. Paupa Rao Naidu* to be Moothēvi, the goddess of sleep, whom they dread and worship more than any other god or goddess of the

* History of Railway Thieves. Madras, 1904.

Hindu Pantheon. The object of this worship is twofold, one being to keep themselves vigilant, and the other to throw their victims off their guard. Moothēvi is invoked in their prayers to keep them sleepless while on their nefarious purpose bent, but withal to make their victims sufficiently sleepy over their property. This goddess is worshipped especially by females, who perform strange orgies periodically, to propitiate her. A secluded spot is preferred för performing these orgies, at which animal sacrifices are made, and there is distribution of liquor in honour of the goddess. The Edayapatti gang worship in addition the deity Ratnasabhapathy at Ayyamala. When prosecuted for a crime, the Koravan invokes his favourite deity to let him off with a whipping in the words 'If the punishment of whipping be inflicted I shall adore the goddess.'

The following account of a peculiar form of human sacrifice by the Koravas in former days was given to Mr. C. Hayavadana Rao by an old inhabitant of the village of Āsūr near Walajabad in the Chingleput district. A big gang settled at the meeting point of the three villages of Āsūr, Mēlputtūr, and Avalūr, on an elevated spot commanding the surrounding country. They had with them their pack-bullocks, each headman of the gang owning about two hundred head. The cow-dung which accumulated daily attracted a good many of the villagers, on one of whom the headmen fixed as their intended victim. They made themselves intimate with him, plied him with drink and tobacco, and gave him the monopoly of the cow-dung. Thus a week or ten days passed away, and the Koravas then fixed a day for the sacrifice. They invited the victim to visit them at dusk, and witness a great festival in honour of their caste goddess. At the appointed hour, the man went

to the settlement, and was induced to drink freely. Meanwhile, a pit, large enough for a man to stand upright in it, had been prepared. At about midnight, the victim was seized, and forced to stand in the pit, which was filled in up to his neck. This done, the women and children of the gang made off with their belongings. As soon as the last of them had quitted the settlement, the headmen brought a large quantity of fresh cow-dung, and placed a ball of it on the head of the victim. The ball served as a support for an earthen lamp, which was lighted. The man was by this time nearly dead, and the cattle were made to pass over his head. The headmen then made off, and, by daybreak, the whole gang had disappeared. The murdered man was found by the villagers, who have, since that time, scrupulously avoided the Koravas. The victim is said to have turned into a Munisvara, and for a long time troubled those who happened to go near the spot at noon or midnight. The Koravas are said to have performed the sacrifice so as to insure their cattle against death from disease. The ground, on which they encamped, and on which they offered the human sacrifice, is stated to have been barren prior thereto, and, as the result thereof, to have become very fertile.

It is said that Korava women invoke the village goddesses when they are telling fortunes. They use a winnowing fan and grains of rice in doing this, and prophesy good or evil, according to the number of grains found on the fan.* They carry a basket, winnow, stick, and a wicker tray in which cowry shells are imbedded in a mixture of cow-dung and turmeric. The basket represents Kolāpuriamma, and the cowries

* Madras Census Report, 1901.



KORAVA WOMAN TELLING FORTUNE.

Pōlēramma. When telling fortunes, the Korava woman places on the basket the winnow, rice, betel leaves and areca nuts, and the wicker tray. Holding her client's hand over the winnow, and moving it about, she commences to chant, and name all sorts of deities. From time to time she touches the hand of the person whose fortune is being told with the stick. The Korava women are very clever in extracting information concerning the affairs of a client before they proceed to tell her fortune.

Brāhmans fix the auspicious hour for marriage, and Chettis are invited to act as priests at the purification ceremony for re-admission into caste of a man or woman who has cohabited with a Paraiyan or Muhammadan, or been beaten with a shoe, etc. For the purpose of re-admission, a panchāyat (council) assembles, at which the headman presides. Enquiries are made into the conduct of the accused, and a fine of two rupees levied. Of this sum the Chetti receives eight annas, with some betel and tobacco. The balance is spent in liquor for those who are assembled. After the Chetti has received his fee, he smears the foreheads of the guilty person and the company with sacred ashes. The impure person goes to a stream or well, and bathes. He then again comes before the council, and is purified by the Chetti again marking his forehead. The proceedings wind up with a feast. In former days, at a trial before a council, the legs of the complainant and accused were tied together. In 1907, a Koracha was excommunicated for having illicit intercourse with a widow. The ceremony of excommunication usually consists of shaving the head and moustache of the guilty person, and making him ride a donkey, wearing a necklace of bones. In the case under reference, a donkey could not be procured, so a temporary shed was made of sajja

(*Setaria italica*) stalks, which were set on fire after the man had passed through it. He was to be re-admitted into the caste by standing a feast to all the members of five gangs of Korachas.

It is said* that "a curious custom of the Kuravans prohibits them from committing crime on new-moon or full-moon days. Once started on an expedition, they are very determined and persistent. There is a case on record where one of a band of Kuravans out on an expedition was drowned in crossing the Cauvery. Nothing daunted by the loss or the omen, they attempted a burglary, and failed. They then tried another house, where they also failed; and it was not till they had met with these three mishaps that their determination weakened, and they went home."

The Koravas are extremely superstitious, and take careful notice of good or bad omens before they start on a criminal expedition. They hold a feast, at which the assistance of the goddess Kolāpuriamma or Perumāl is sought. A young goat, with coloured thread attached to its horns, and a garland of margosa leaves with a piece of turmeric round its neck, is taken to an out-of-the-way shrine. Here it is placed before the deity, and cocoanuts are broken. The god is asked whether the expedition will be successful. If the body of the animal quivers, it is regarded as an answer in the affirmative; if it does not, the expedition will be abandoned. If in addition to quivering, the animal urinates, no better sign could be hoped for. The Koravas make it a point of honour to pay for the goat used for this religious purpose. It was information of this ceremony having been performed which led to the

* Gazetteer of the Trichinopoly district.

detection of a torchlight dacoity in the Cuddapah district in 1896. The expedition was in the first instance successful, for the Koravas broke into a Kōmati's house in the middle of a village, and carried off a quantity of jewels. The Kōmati's arm was broken, and he and other inmates of the house were badly burnt by lighted torches thrust against their faces and bodies. Among other methods of consulting the omens is to sacrifice a fowl at a shrine, and sit in front thereof listening for the direction whence the chirping of lizards issues. If the omens are auspicious, the members of the expedition start off, armed as a rule with lātis (sticks) and axes. If they attack a cart, they commence by throwing stones at it, to ascertain if the occupant has fire-arms with him. Houses are generally broken into by means of a hole made in the wall near the door-latch. In the Ceded Districts, where the houses are as a rule substantially built of rough stone, and have flat roofs of salt earth, an opening is frequently effected through the roof. The Koravas are often extremely cruel in the methods which they adopt to extort information from inhabitants of houses as to where their valuables are concealed. In common with other Hindus, they avoid the shadow of the thandra tree (*Terminalia belerica*), in which the spirit of Sanēswaradu is believed to reside. In this connection the following legend is recited.* In the city of Bīmanapuram there ruled a king named Bīmarāju, who had a beautiful daughter named Damayanti, with whom the gods, including Nalamahārāju, fell in love. Damayanti had never seen Nalamahārāju, but loved him on account of the stories which reached her of the justice with which he governed his kingdom, and his chastity.

* This story is based on well-known episode of Nalacharitra in the Áranya Parva of the Mahabharatha.

To avoid being charged with partiality in disposing of his daughter's hand, Bīmarāju determined to invite all the gods to his house, and the one to whom Damayanti should throw a garland of flowers should claim her as his wife. The day fixed on arrived, and all the gods assembled, except Sanēswaradu, who appears to have been unavoidably detained. The gods were seated in a circle, and a fly guided Damayanti to Nalamahārāju, on whose neck she threw the garland. Nalamahārāju at once claimed her as his wife, and started off with her to his kingdom. On the way they met Sanēswaradu, who demanded an explanation of their being in each other's company. He was told, and was very angry because the matter had been settled in his absence, and swore a mighty oath that they should be separated. To this end, he caused all sorts of difficulties to come in their way. Under his spell, Nalamahārāju took to gambling, and lost all his property. He was separated from Damayanti, and lived in poverty for years. The spell of Sanēswaradu could, however, only last for a certain number of years, and, when the time expired, Nalamahārāju set out for Bīmanapuram, to find Damayanti who had returned to her father's house. On the way, under a thandra tree, he met Sanēswaradu, who confessed that he was the cause of all the troubles that had befallen him, and begged that he would look leniently on his fault. Nalamahārāju would not forgive him, but, after cursing him, ordained that he should live for ever in the thandra tree, so that the area over which he could do wrong should be limited. It is for this reason that all wandering tribes avoid pitching a camp within the shadow of this tree. A tree (*Terminalia Catappa*) belonging to the same genus as the thandra is regarded as a lucky one to camp beneath, as it was

under one of these trees that Rāma made a bower when he lived with Sīta and Lakshmana after his banishment to the forest of Dandaka.

In connection with omens and superstitions, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "Koravas, being highly superstitious, are constantly on the look-out for omens, especially before starting out on an excursion when the objective is dacoity or housebreaking. The household deity, represented by a brick picked up at random, is worshipped, and a sheep or fowl is sacrificed. Water is first poured over the animal, and, if it shakes its body, the omen is good, while, if it stands perfectly still, there is misfortune ahead. It is unfortunate, when starting, to see widows, pots of milk, dogs urinating, a man leading a bull, or a bull bellowing. On the other hand, it is downright lucky when a bull bellows at the scene of the criminal operation. To see a man goading a bull is a good omen when starting, and a bad one at the scene. Sprinkling urine over doors and walls of a house facilitates breaking into it. The failure of an expedition is generally attributed to the evil eye, or the evil tongue, whose bad effects are evinced in many ways. If the excursion has been for housebreaking, the housebreaking implement is often soldered at its sharp end with panchalokam (five metals), to counteract the effect of the evil eye. The evil tongue is a frequent cause of failure. It consists in talking evil of others, or harping on probable misfortunes. There are various ways of removing its unhappy effects. A mud figure of a man is made on the ground, and thorns are placed over the mouth. This is the man with the evil tongue. Those who have suffered walk round it, crying out and beating their mouths ; the greater the noise, the better the effect. Cutting the neck of a fowl half through and allowing it to flutter about, or inserting

a red hot splinter in its anus to madden it with pain, are considered to be effective, while, if a cock should crow after its neck has been cut, calamities are averted. The fowl is a sort of adjunct to the Koravar's life. In early childhood, the first experiments in his career consist in stealing fowls; in manhood he feasts on them when he is well off, and he uses them, as we have seen, with abominable cruelty for divination or averting misfortune. The number seven is considered ominous, and an expedition never consists of seven men. The word for the number seven in Telugu resembles the word for weeping, and is considered to be unlucky. A man who has returned from jail, or who has been newly married, is not as a rule taken on an expedition. In the case of the former, the rule may be set aside by bringing a lamb from a neighbouring flock. A man who forgets to bring his stick, or to equip or arm himself properly, is always left behind. As in the case of dacoities, seven is an unlucky number to start out for housebreaking, but, should it be unavoidable, a fiction is indulged in of making the housebreaking implement the eighth member of the gang. When there are dogs about a house, they are soon kept quiet with powdered gajjakai or ganja leaves mixed with cooked rice, which they eat greedily. Detached parties in the jungle or elsewhere are able to unite by making sounds like the howling of jackals or hooting of owls. The direction taken on a road, or in the forest, is indicated by throwing the leaves of the tangēdu (*Cassia auriculata*) along the road. At cross-roads, the road taken is indicated by the thick end of a twig of the tangēdu placed under a stone. Rows of stones, one piled over the other, are also used to point out the route taken when crossing hills. The women resort to divination, but not accompanied by cruelty,

when their husbands are long enough absent to arouse apprehension of danger. A long piece is pulled out of a broom, and to one end of it are tied several small pieces dipped in oil. If the stick floats in water, all is well; but, should it sink, two of the women start out at once to find the men. They generally know as a matter of pre-arrangement whereabouts to find them, and proceed thither, pretending to sell karipak (curry leaves). The eighteenth day of the Tamil month Avani is the luckiest day of all for committing crimes. A successful criminal exploit on this day ensures good luck throughout the year. Sundays, which are auspicious for weddings, are inauspicious for crimes. Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays are unlucky until noon for starting out from home. So, too, is the day after new moon. Fridays are unsuitable for breaking into the houses of Brāhmans or Kōmatis, as they may be engaged in worshipping Ankalamma, to whom the day is sacred."

Many Koravas examined by Mr. Mainwaring were injured in one way or another. One man had his left nostril split, and explained that it was the result of a bite by another Korava in the course of a drunken brawl at a toddy-shop. Another had lost some of his teeth in a similar quarrel, and a third was minus the lobe of his right ear.

A characteristic of the Koravas, which is well marked, is their hairlessness. They have plenty of straight hair on the head, but their bodies are particularly smooth. Even the pubic hairs are scanty, and the abdominal hairs are abundant only in a few instances. The Korava is not, in appearance, the typical criminal of one's imagination, of the Bill Sykes type. That even the innocent looking individuals are criminal by nature, the following figures establish. In 1902, there were

739 Koravas, or Korchas as they are called in the Anantapur district, on the police registers as members of wandering gangs or ordinary suspects. Of these, no less than 215, or 29 per cent., had at least one conviction recorded against them. In the Nellore district, in 1903, there were 54 adult males on the register, of whom no less than 24, or 44 per cent., had convictions against them. In the Salem district, in the same year, there were 118 adult male Koravas registered, against 38, or 32·2 per cent. of whom convictions stood. There are, of course, hundreds who escape active surveillance by assuming an ostensible means of livelihood, and allowances must be made for the possibility of numbers escaping conviction for offences they may have committed. The women are equally criminal with the men, but are less frequently caught. They have no hesitation in concealing small articles by passing them into the vagina. The best way of ascertaining whether this has been done is said to be to make them jump. In this way, at a certain feast, a gold jewel was recovered from a woman, and she was convicted.* This expedient is, however, not always effectual. A case came under notice, in 1901, at the Kolar gold fields, in which a woman had a small packet of stolen gold amalgam passed to her during the search of the house by her husband, who was suspected. She begged permission to leave the house to urinate. The request was granted, and a constable who went with her on her return reported her conduct as suspicious. A female searcher was procured, and the parcel found jammed transversely in the vagina, and required manipulation to dislodge it. Small jewels, which the Koravas manage to steal, are at once

---

* M. Paupa Rao Naidu. *Op. cit.*

concealed in the mouth, and even swallowed. When swallowed, the jewel is next day recovered with the help of a purgative. In this way a half sovereign was recovered a few years ago.* Male Koravas sometimes conceal stolen articles in the rectum. In the Tanjore district a Korava Kēpmari, who was suspected of having resorted to this dodge, was examined by a medical officer, and two thin gold chains, each about 14 inches long, were extracted. The females take an important part in resisting an attempt to arrest the males. I am informed that, "when a raid is made on an encampment, the males make off, while the females, stripping themselves, dance in a state of nudity, hoping thereby to attract the constables to them, while the males get clear away. Should, however, these manœuvres fail to attain their object, the females proceed to lacerate the pudenda, from which blood flows profusely. They then lie down as if dead. The unfortunate constables, though proof against amorous advances, must perforce assist them in their distress. If it comes to searching Korava huts, the females take a leading part in attacking the intruders, and will not hesitate to stone them, or break chatties (earthen pots) on their heads."

It is recorded, in the Cuddapah Manual, that "a Yerukala came to a village, and, under the pretence of begging, ascertained which women wore jewels, and whether the husbands of any such were employed at night in the fields. In the night he returned, and, going to the house he had previously marked, suddenly snatched up the sleeping woman by the massive kamma (gold ear-ring) she wore, sometimes with such violence as to lift up the woman, and always in such a way as to

---

* *Ibid.*

wrench off the lobe of the ear. This trick he repeated in three different hamlets of the same village on one night, and in one house on two women. In one case, the woman had been lifted so high that, when the ear gave way, she fell to the ground, and severely injured her head." A new form of house robbery is said to have been started by the Koravas in recent years. They mark down the residence of a woman, whose jewels are worth stealing, and lurk outside the house before dawn. Then, when the woman comes out, as is the custom, before the men are stirring, they snatch her ear-rings and other ornaments, and are gone before an alarm can be raised.* Another favourite method of securing jewelry is for the Korava to beg for rice, from door to door, on a dark night, crying "Sandi bichcham, Amma, Sandi bichcham" (night alms, mother, night alms). Arrived at the house of his victim, he cries out, and the lady of the house brings out a handful of rice, and puts it in his pot. As she does so, he makes a grab at her tāli or other neck ornament, and makes off with the spoil.

"Stolen property", Mr. Mullaly writes,† "is disposed of, as soon as they can get a suitable remuneration. The general bargain is Re. 1 for a rupee's weight of gold. They do not, however, as a rule, lose much over their transactions, and invariably convert their surplus into sovereigns. In searching a Koravar encampment on one occasion, the writer had the good fortune to discover a number of sovereigns which, for safe keeping, were stitched in the folds of their pack saddles. Undisposed of property, which had been buried, is brought to the encampment at nightfall, and taken back and re-buried before dawn. The ground round the pegs, to which

* Police Report, 1902. † *Op. cit.*

their asses are tethered, in heaps of ashes or filth, are favourite places for burying plunder."

The Koravas disguise themselves as Kēpmaris, Alagiris or pūjāris. The terms Kēpmari, Alagiri, Kathirivāndlu, etc., are applied to certain persons who adopt particular methods in committing crime, all of which are adopted by the Koravas. The Tamil equivalent of Kēpmari is Talapa Mathi, or one who changes his head-dress. Alagiris are thieves who worship at the temple of Kalla Alagar near Madura, and vow that a percentage of their ill-gotten gains will be given as an offering to his temple. Kathirivāndlu (scissors people) are those who operate with knives or scissors, snipping off chains, cutting the strings of purses, and ripping open bags or pockets.

The Koravas are not nice as regards the selection of some of their food. Cats, fowls, fish, pigs, the black-faced monkey known in Telugu as kondamuchu, jackals, field rats, deer, antelope, goats and sheep serve as articles of dietary. There is a Tamil proverb "Give an elephant to a pandit, and a cat to a Kuravan." They will not eat cattle or buffaloes, and will not take food in company with Muhammadans, barbers, washermen, carpenters, goldsmiths, blacksmiths, Paraiyans or Chakkiliyans. The Bōyas seem to be the lowest class with whom they will eat. They drink heavily when funds are available, or at social gatherings, when free drinks are forthcoming. At council meetings liquor must be supplied by the disputants, and there is a proverb, "With dry mouths nothing can be uttered."

Most Koravas possess knives, and a kind of bill-hook, called koduvāl, which is a sort of compromise between a sword and a sickle. The back of the blade is heavy, and renders it capable of dealing a very severe

blow. With this implement animals are slaughtered, murders committed, and bamboos split.

For the purpose of committing burglaries, the Koravas are said by Mr. Mullaly to use an iron instrument pointed at either end, called gādi kōlu or sillu kōlu, which is offered, before a gang sets out, to Perumāl, whose aid in the success of the undertaking is invoked.

The Koravas as a class are industrious, and generally doing something. One may see the men on the march twisting threads into stout cord. Others will be making fine nets for fishing, or coarse ones, in which to suspend household pots or utensils; straw pads, on which the round-bottomed chatties invariably stand; or a design with red thread and cowry shells, wherewith to decorate the head of a bull or a money-bag. It is when hawking these articles from door to door that the Koravas are said to gain information as to property which may be worth stealing. The following is a free translation of a song representing Koracha characteristics, in a play by Mr. D. Krishnamacharlu, a well-known amateur dramatist of Bellary:—

Hurrah! Our Koracha caste is a very fine caste,
The best of castes, Hurrah!

When a temple feast is proceeding,
We beg, and commit thefts surprising.
Don't we? Care we for aught?
Don't we slip off uncaught?

(Chorus.)

Cutting trinkets off,
From the necks of babes in their mothers' arms.
Who could suspect us? Cannot we hoodwink them all?
Cannot we get away?

(Chorus.)



YERUKALA SETTLEMENT.

When those eternal watchmen catch us,
After endless search take life out of us.
Do we blurt out? Do we confess?
Don't we enquire what is our offence?

(Chorus.)

In the south, the Koravas are frequently employed by villagers as watchmen (kāvalgars) on the principle of setting a thief to keep other thieves off. They are paid in grain. The villagers are more than half afraid of them, and, if the remuneration stipulated upon is not promptly paid to the watchmen, a house-breaking will certainly occur in the village. If a crime happens to take place in a village where a Korava has been appointed watchman, he frequently manages to get back the stolen property if the theft is the work of another Korava, but only on condition that the police are not called in to investigate the offence.

The dwellings in which the Koravas live are made with low mud walls and thatched. The wanderers erect a temporary hut called gudisē, with mats or cocoanut or palmyra palm leaves, not more than 4 feet high. It is constructed of crossed bamboos tied together, and connected by another bamboo, which serves as a ridge, over which they fasten the mats.

Marriages are arranged by the elders. The father of a youth who is of a marriageable age calls together some of the elders of his division, and proceeds in quest of a suitable bride. If the family visited consents to the match, the headman is sent for, and a move is made to the toddy-shop. Here the father of the future bridegroom fills a small earthen vessel, called in Telugu muntha, and offers it to the father of the bride-elect, asking him, Do you know why I give you this toddy? The recipient replies, It is because I have given you

my daughter, and I drink to her health. The vessel is refilled and offered to the headman, who takes it, and enquires of the father of the girl why he is to drink. The reply is, Because I have given my daughter to ——— 's son; drink to her health. The questions and answers are repeated while every one present, according to rank, has a drink. Those who have so drunk at this betrothal ceremony are looked upon as witnesses to the contract. After the drinking ceremony, an adjournment is made to the girl's house, where a feast is partaken of. At the conclusion thereof, the future bridegroom's people enquire if the girl has a maternal uncle, to whom the purchase money should be paid. The purchase money is 101 madas (a mada = two rupees), and is always the same for both well-to-do and poor. But, as a matter of fact, the whole of it is never paid. A few instalments are sometimes handed over, but generally the money is the cause of endless quarrels. When, however, the families, are on good terms, and the husband enjoys the hospitality of his wife's maternal uncle, or *vice versâ*, it is a common thing for one to say to the other after a drink, See, brother-in-law, I have paid you two madas to-day, so deduct this from the vōli (purchase money). After the marriage has been arranged, and the maternal uncle has paid four annas as an earnest of the transaction, the party disperses until such time as the principals are in a position to perform the wedding. They might be infants, or the girl immature, or the intended husband be away. After the betrothal ceremony, the parents of the girl should on no account break off the match. If this were done, the party of the husband-elect would summon those who were present at the drinking ceremony to a meeting, and he who partook of the second drink (the headman)

would demand from the father of the girl an explanation of the breach of contract. No explanation is likely to be satisfactory, and the father is fined three hundred varāhas.* This sum, like the purchase money, is seldom paid, but the award of it places the party from whom it is due in a somewhat inferior position to the party to whom it is payable. They occupy thenceforth the position of creditor to debtor. On the occasion of quarrels, no delicate sense of refinement restrains the former from alluding to the debt, and the position would be retained through several generations. There is a Tamil proverb that the quarrels of a Korava and an Idaiyan are not easily settled. If the contracting parties are ready to fulfil their engagement, the maternal uncle of the girl is paid five varāhas as the first instalment of the purchase money, and a Brāhman purōhit is asked to fix an auspicious time for the marriage ceremony. At the appointed time, the wedding party assembles at the home of the bride, and the first day is spent in eating and drinking, the bride and bridegroom being arrayed in new clothes purchased at the expense of the bride's father. On the following day, they again feast. The contracting couple are seated on a kambli (blanket), on which some grains of rice have been previously sprinkled. The guests form a circle round them, and, at the auspicious moment, the bridegroom ties a string of black beads round the bride's neck. When the string has been tied, the married women present, with hands crossed, throw rice over the heads of the pair. This rice has been previously prepared, and consists of five seers of rice with five pieces of turmeric, dried cocoanut, dried date fruit and jaggery (crude sugar), and five silver or copper

* A varāha or pagoda was worth Rs. 3-8-0.

coins. While the rice-throwing is proceeding, a monotonous song is crooned, of which the following is a free translation :—

Procure five white bulls.
Get five white goats.
Obtain a seer * of silver.
Get a seer of gold.
Always love your father
And live happy for ever.
Look after your mother always,
Your father and mother-in-law.
Do not heed what folk say.
Look after your relations,
And the God above will keep you happy.
Five sons and four daughters
Shall compose your family.

A predominance of sons is always considered desirable, and, with five sons and four daughters, the mystic number nine is reached.

No widows, women who have remarried, or girls dedicated as prostitutes, are allowed to join the wedding circle, as they would be of evil omen to the bride. Widows and remarried women must have lost a husband, and the prostitute never knows the God to whose service she is dedicated. On the third day, the rice-throwing ceremony is repeated, but on this occasion the bride and bridegroom pour some of the rice over each other's heads before the women officiate. This ends the marriage ceremony, but, as among some other classes, consummation is prohibited for at least three months, as a very strong superstition exists that three heads should not enter a door within one year. The bride and bridegroom are the first two heads to enter the new home,

* A seer is an Indian measure of weight, varying in different parts of the country.

and the birth of a child within the year would constitute the third. This undesirable event is rendered less likely by a postponement of consummation. After the prescribed time has lapsed, the bride, with feigned reluctance, is escorted by her female relations to her husband's hut. On the way obscene pleasantries, which evoke much merriment, are indulged in. The bride's pretended reluctance necessitates a certain amount of compulsion, and she is given an occasional shove. Finally, she is thrust into the door of the hut, and the attendant women take their departure.

The following details in another form of the marriage rites may be noted. The bridegroom proceeds on a Saturday to the settlement of the bride, where a hut has been set up for him close to that of the bride. Both the huts should face the east. On the following day, the headman, or an elder, brings a tray containing betel, flowers and kankanams (wrist-threads). He ties the threads round the wrists of the bride and bridegroom, and also round a pestle and mortar and a crowbar. A distribution of rice to all present, including infants, follows, and pork and mutton are also distributed. Towards evening, married women go, with music produced by beating on a brass tray, to a well or tank, with three pots beneath a canopy (ulladam). The pots are filled with water, and placed near the marriage milk-post. The bride takes her seat on a plank, and the bridegroom is carried on the shoulders of his brother-in-law, and conducted to another plank. Three married women, and some old men, then pour rice over the heads of the pair, while the following formula is repeated: "Try to secure four pairs of donkeys, a few pigs and cattle; live well and amicably; feed your guests well; grow wise and live." The couple are then taken to the bride's hut, the

entrance to which is guarded by several married women, who will not allow them to enter till the bridegroom has given out the name of the bride. Within the hut, the pair exchange food three times, and what remains after they have eaten is finished off by some married men and women. That night the pair sleep in the bride's hut, together with the best man and bridesmaid. On the following day, a feast is held, at which every house must be represented by at least one married woman. Towards evening, the bridegroom takes the bride to his hut, and, just before they start, her mother ties up some rice in her cloth. At the entrance to the hut, a basket, called Kolāpuriamma's basket, is placed. Depositing a winnowing tray thereon, the bride pours the rice which has been given to her on it. The rice is then transferred by the bridegroom to the mortar, and he and the bride pound it with the pestle and crowbar. The tāli is then tied by the bridegroom round the bride's neck.

In connection with marriage, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. " A girl's mother's brother's son has the right to have her to wife, and, if his right is abrogated by giving her to another, he (or his father ?) receives a penalty from the man to whom she is given. The girl's maternal uncle disposes of the girl. In the Coimbatore district, however, it is the father who is said to do so; indeed it is said that the father can even take a girl away from her husband, and give her to another for a higher bride-price. Prior to marriage proper, there is the betrothal, accompanied by presentation of betel leaves and draughts of toddy, when the maternal uncle or father repeats a regular formula which is answered word for word by the girl's party, in which he agrees to hand over the girl for such a price, at the same time

requiring that she shall receive no bodily injury or have her hair cut, and, if she is returned damaged physically, payment shall be made according to a fixed rate. It should be said that the betrothal sometimes takes place at a tavern, the favourite haunt of the Koravas, where the bridegroom's party offers a pail of toddy to the father of the girl and his party. The emptying of this pail seals the marriage contract, and involves the father of the girl into payment of the bride-price as a fine, together with a fine of Rs. 2 for every male child, and Rs. 4 for every female child that may be born. This penalty, which is known as ranku, is not, as a rule, pressed at once, but only after some children have been born. The day of marriage, generally a Sunday, is fixed by a Brāhman, who receives betel nuts, cocoanuts, one rupee, or even less. He selects an auspicious day and hour for the event. The hour selected is rather early in the evening, so that the marriage may be consummated the same night. A few days before the appointed day, two unmarried lads cut a branch of the nāval tree (*Eugenia Jambolana*), and throw it into a tank (pond) or river, where it is left until the wedding day, when the same two lads bring it back, and plant it in the ground near the dwelling of the bride, and on either side of it is placed a pot of water (brought from the tank or river where the branch had been left to soak) carried thither by two married women under a canopy. The mouth of each pot is closed by placing on top an earthen vessel on which is a lamp. The bride and bridegroom sit on donkey saddles spread on the ground, and undergo the nalugu ceremony, in which their hands and feet are rubbed nine times with saffron (turmeric) coloured red with chunam (lime). The elders bless the couple, throwing rice over their heads with crossed hands, and

all the while the women chant monotonously a song such as this:—

Galianame Baipokame Sobaname,
Oh, Marriage giver of happiness and prosperity!
The best oil of Madanapalle is this nalugu;
The best soap seed of Silakat is for this nalugu;
Paint yourselves, Oh sisters, with the best of colours;
Stain your cloth, Oh brother, with the best of dyes;
Bring, Oh brother, the greenest of snakes;
Adorn with it our Basavayya's neck;
Bring, Oh brother, the flowers without leaves;
Adorn with them the hair of the bride.

Then the bridegroom ties the bride's tāli, a string coloured yellow with saffron (turmeric), or a string of small black beads. Every married woman must wear a necklet of black beads, and glass bangles on her wrists; when she becomes a widow, she must remove them. A feature of the ceremony not to be overlooked is the wedding meal (pendlikudu). After undergoing the nalugu, the bridegroom marks with a crowbar the spot where this meal, consisting of rice, milk, green gram, and jaggery (sugar), is to be cooked in a pot called bhūpalakunda. A trench is dug at the spot, and over it the cooking is done. When the food is ready, the bride and bridegroom take of it each three handfuls, and then the boys and girls snatch the pot away from them. After this, the couple proceed to the bridegroom's hut, where they find a light burning. The elders sprinkle them with water coloured yellow with saffron (turmeric) as they enter."

For the following note on marriage among the Yerukalas of the Vizagapatam district, I am indebted to Mr. Hayavadana Rao. A man may marry the daughter of his paternal aunt or maternal uncle. The father of the would-be husband of a girl goes with ten rupees,

called sullaponnu, to her home, and pays the money to one of several elders who are brought together. Towards evening, the ground in front of the girl's hut is swept, and a wooden plank and stone are set side by side. The bridegroom sits on the former, and the bride on the latter. Two pots of water are placed before them, and connected together by a thread tied round their necks. The pots are lifted up, and the water is poured over them. Contrary to the custom prevailing among many castes, new cloths are not given to them after this bath. Resuming their seats, the couple sprinkle each other with rice. An intelligent member of the caste then personates a Brāhman priest, mutters sundry mantrams (prayers), and shows a string (karugu) with a piece of turmeric tied to it to those assembled. It is touched by them in token of a blessing, and tied by the bridegroom on the neck of the bride. A feast, with a liberal supply of liquor, is held, the expenses of which are met from the ten rupees already referred to. The younger brother may marry the widow of an elder brother, and *vice versâ*. A widow is married in front of her mother's hut. The marriage string is tied round her neck, but without the ceremonial observed at the marriage of a maid. If a husband wishes to secure a divorce, he asks his wife to break a twig in two before a caste council. If a woman wishes for a divorce, she elopes with a man, who pays a small fine, called ponnu, to the husband, and asks him to break a twig.

The following story is current among the Koramas, to account for the tāli or bottu being replaced by a string of black beads. Once upon a time, a bridegroom forgot to bring the tāli, and he was told off to procure the necessary piece of gold from a goldsmith. The parties waited and waited, but the young man did not return.

Since then, the string of beads has been used as a marriage badge. According to another story, the tāli was prepared, and kept on the bank of a river, but disappeared when it was going to be picked up. A man was sent to procure another, but did not come back.

I am informed that the Yerukalas of the Kistna district are divided into two classes—sheep and goats practically. Of these, the latter are the bastard offspring of the former. Illegitimate must, in the first instance, marry illegitimate. The offspring thereof is *ipso facto* whitewashed, and becomes legitimate, and must marry a legitimate.

A custom is stated by Dr. Shortt * to prevail among the Yerukalas, by which the first two daughters of a family may be claimed by the maternal uncle as wives for his sons. "The value of a wife is fixed at twenty pagodas. The maternal uncle's right to the first two daughters is valued at eight out of twenty pagodas, and is carried out thus. If he urges his preferential claim, and marries his own sons to his nieces, he pays for each only twelve pagodas ; and similarly if he, from not having sons, or any other cause, foregoes his claim, he receives eight pagodas of the twenty paid to the girl's parents by anybody else who may marry them." The price of a wife apparently differs in different localities. For example, it is noted, in the Census report, 1901, that, among the Kongu sub-division of the Koravas, a man can marry his sister's daughter, and, when he gives his sister in marriage, he expects her to produce a bride for him. His sister's husband accordingly pays Rs. 7–8–0 out of the Rs. 60 of which the bride price consists, at the wedding itself, and Rs. 2–8–0 more each year

* Trans. Eth. Sec. N.S., VII.

until the woman bears a daughter. Some Koravas seem to be even more previous than fathers who enter their infant sons for a popular house at a public school. For their children are said to be espoused even before they are born. Two men, who wish their children to marry, say to one another: "If your wife should have a girl and mine a boy (or *vice versâ*), they must marry." And, to bind themselves to this, they exchange tobacco, and the potential bridegroom's father stands a drink to the future bride's relations. But if, after the children are grown up, a Brāhman should pronounce the omens unpropitious, the marriage does not take place, and the bride's father pays back the cost of the liquor consumed at the betrothal. If the marriage is arranged, a pot of water is placed before the couple, and a grass (*Cynodon Dactylon*) put into the water. This is equal to a binding oath between them.* Of this grass it is said in the Atharwana Vēda: "May this grass, which rose from the water of life, which has a hundred roots and a hundred stems, efface a hundred of my sins, and prolong my existence on earth for a hundred years." It is noted by the Rev. J. Cain † that "at the birth of a daughter, the father of an unmarried little boy often brings a rupee, and ties it in the cloth of the father of the newly born girl. When the girl is grown up, he can claim her for his son. For twenty-five rupees he can claim her much earlier."

In North Arcot, the Koravas are said ‡ to "mortgage their unmarried daughters, who become the absolute property of the mortgagee till the debt is discharged. The same practice exists in Chingleput and Tanjore. In Madras, the Koravars sell their wives outright when

* J. F. Kearns, Kalyāna Shatanku, 1868. † Ind. Ant., III., 1874.

‡ Madras Census Report, 1871.

they want money, for a sum equal to fifty rupees. In Nellore and other districts, they all purchase their wives, the price varying from thirty to seventy rupees, but money rarely passes on such occasions, the consideration being paid in asses or cattle." In a recent case in the Madras High Court, a Korava stated that he had sold one of his wives for twenty-one rupees.* It is stated by Dr. Pope that the Koravas do not "scruple to pawn their wives for debt. If the wife who is in pledge dies a natural death, the debt is discharged. If she should die from hard usage, the creditor must not only cancel the debt, but must defray the expenses of a second marriage for his debtor. If the woman lives till the debt is discharged, and if she has children by the creditor, the boys remain with him, the girls go back with her to her husband." The conditions of the country suggest a reason for the pawning of wives. A wife would be pawned in times of stress, and redeemed after seasons of plenty. The man who can afford to accept her in pledge in a time of famine would, in periods of plenty, require men for agricultural purposes. He, therefore, retains the male issue, who in time will be useful to him. Some years ago, some Koravas were convicted of stealing the despatch-box of the Collector of a certain district from his tent. It came out, in the course of the trial, that the head of the gang had taken the money contained therein as his share, and with it acquired a wife. The Collector humorously claimed that the woman, having been obtained with his money, was, according to a section of the Criminal Procedure Code, his property.

A woman who marries seven men successively one after the other, either after the death of her husbands or

---

* Madras Census Report, 1901.

after divorce, is said by Mr. Paupa Rao Naidu to be considered to be a respectable lady, and is called Pedda Bōyisāni. She takes the lead in marriages and other religious ceremonies.

It is noted, in the Census Report, 1891, that "if a man is sent to jail, his wife will form a connection with some other man of the gang, but on the release of her husband, she will return to him with any children born to her in the interval. The Korava women are accustomed to honour their lords and husbands with the dignified title of cocks." On one occasion, a Korava got into trouble in company with a friend, and was sentenced to three years imprisonment, while his friend got two years. The latter, at the termination of his period of enforced seclusion, proceeded to live with the wife of the former, settling down in his friend's abode. The former escaped from jail, and, turning up at his home, claimed his wife. His friend journeyed to the place where the jail was located, and reported to the authorities his ability to find the escaped convict, who was recaptured, while his friend regained possession of his wife, and pocketed twenty-five rupees for giving the information which led to his rearrest.

The remarriage of widows is permitted. The man who wishes to marry a widow purchases new cloths for himself and his bride. He invites a number of friends, and, in their presence, presents his bride with the cloths. The simple ceremony is known as chīrakattu-kōradam, or desiring the cloth-tying ceremony.

As a general rule, the Korava wife is faithful to her husband, but, in the event of incompatibility, man and wife will announce their intention of separating to their gang. This is considered equivalent to a divorce, and the husband can demand back the four annas, which

were paid as earnest money to his wife's maternal uncle. This is said to be done, whether the separation is due to the fault either of the husband or the wife. Among other castes, the woman has to return the money only if she is divorced owing to her own fault. Divorce is said to be rare, and, even after it has taken place, the divorced parties may make up their differences, and continue to keep house together. In cases of abduction, the father of the girl summons a council meeting, at which the offender is fined. A girl who has been abducted cannot be married as a spinster, even if she was recovered before sexual connection had taken place. The man who carried her off should marry her, and the ceremony of widow marriage is performed. In the event of his refusing to marry her, he is fined in the same amount as the parents of a girl who fail to keep the contract to marry her to a particular person. The fact of a man who abducts a girl having a wife already would be no bar to his marrying her, as polygamy is freely permitted. In former days, an adulterer who was unable to pay the fine imposed was tied to a tree, and shaved by a barber, who used the urine of the guilty woman in lieu of water.

In connection with birth ceremonies, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "Difficulty in parturition is thought to be due to an ungratified desire of the woman before she is confined. This is generally something to eat, but it is sometimes ungratified lust. In cases of the latter kind, the Koravar midwife induces the woman to mention her paramour's name, and, as the name is mentioned, the midwife puts a pinch of earth into the woman's mouth with the idea of accelerating delivery. The woman is confined in an outlying hut, where she is tabu to all, with the exception of the midwife, for about ten days. As soon as the child is born, incense is burnt in front

of this hut, and there is an offering of jaggery (crude sugar) to the spirits of the departed elders, who are invoked in the following words in the Korava dialect:—'Ye spirits of our elders! Descend on us, give us help, and increase our cattle and wealth. Save us from the Sircar (Government), and shut the mouth of the police. We shall worship you for ever and ever.' The jaggery is then distributed to all present, and the new-born infant is cleaned with cow-dung and washed. A Brahman is sometimes consulted, but it is the maternal uncle upon whom the responsibility falls of naming the child. This he does on the ninth day after confinement, when the mother and child are bathed. Having named the child, he ties a string of thread or cotton round its waist. This string signifies the entry of the child into the Koravar community, and it, or its substitute, is worn until the termination of married life. The name given on this occasion is not usually the name by which an individual is known by his fellows, as persons are generally called after some physical trait or characteristic thus:—Nallavādu, black man; Pottigādu, short man; Nettakalādu, long-legged man; Kuntādu, lame man; Boggagādu, fat man; Juttuvādu, man with a large tuft of hair; Gunadu, hunch-backed man; Mugadu, dumb man; and so on. In a few cases, children are genuinely named after the household deities. Those so named are called Rāmudu, Lachigādu, Venkatigādu, Gengadu, Chengadu, Subbadu, Ankaligādu, and so on. An old custom was to brand the children on the shoulders with a piece of red-hot iron. Marks of such branding are called the cattle mark, for it seems that children should be branded on the shoulders before undertaking the 'sacred duty' of tending cattle. They explain the custom by saying that Krishna, the God of the shepherds,

allowed boys of his own caste, and of no other, to perform the sacred duty, after the boy dedicated thereto had undergone the branding ceremony. This ceremony is seldom observed nowadays, as it leads to identification. Birth of a child on a new-moon night, when the weather is strong, is believed to augur a notorious thieving future for the infant. Such children are commonly named Venkatigādu after the God at Tirupati. The birth of a child having the umbilical cord twisted round its neck portends the death of the father or maternal uncle. This unpleasant effect is warded off by the uncle or the father killing a fowl, and wearing its entrails round his neck, and afterwards burying them along with the umbilical cord."

The practice of the couvade, or custom in accordance with which the father takes to bed, and is doctored when a baby is born, is referred to by Alberuni * (about A.D. 1030), who says that, when a child is born, people show particular attention to the man, not to the woman. There is a Tamil proverb that, if a Korati is brought to bed, her husband takes the prescribed stimulant. Writing about the Yerukalas,† the Rev. J. Cain tells us that "directly the woman feels the birth pains, she informs her husband, who immediately takes some of her clothes, puts them on, places on his forehead the mark which the women usually place on theirs, retires into a dark room where there is only a very dim lamp, and lies down on the bed, covering himself up with a long cloth. When the child is born, it is washed, and placed on the cot beside the father. Asafœtida, jaggery, and other articles are then given, not to the mother, but to the father. He is not allowed to leave his bed, but has

* India. Trübner. Oriental Series.

† Ind. Ant., III, 1874.

everything needful brought to him." Among the Kuravars, or basket-makers of Malabar, "as soon as the pains of delivery come upon a pregnant woman, she is taken to an outlying shed, and left alone to live or die as the event may turn out. No help is given her for twenty-eight days. Even medicines are thrown to her from a distance; and the only assistance rendered is to place a jar of warm water close by her just before the child is born. Pollution from birth is held as worse than that from death. At the end of the twenty-eight days, the hut in which she was confined is burnt down. The father, too, is polluted for fourteen days, and, at the end of that time, he is purified, not like other castes by the barber, but by holy water obtained from Brāhmans at temples or elsewhere." To Mr. G. Krishna Rao, Superintendent of Police in the Shimoga district of Mysore, I am indebted for the following note on the couvade as practiced among the Koramas. "Mr. Rice, in the Mysore Gazetteer, says that among the Koravars it is said that, when a woman is confined, her husband takes medicine for her. At the instance of the British Resident I made enquiries, and learned that the Kukke (basket-making) Koramas, living at Gōpāla village near Shimoga, had this custom among them. The husband learns from his wife the probable time of her confinement, and keeps at home awaiting the delivery. As soon as she is confined, he goes to bed for three days, and takes medicine consisting of chicken and mutton broth spiced with ginger, pepper, onions, garlic, etc. He drinks arrack, and eats as good food as he can afford, while his wife is given boiled rice with a very small quantity of salt, for fear that a larger quantity may induce thirst. There is generally a Korama midwife to help the wife, and the husband does nothing but

eat, drink, and sleep. The clothes of the husband, the wife, and the midwife are given to a washerman to be washed on the fourth day, and the persons themselves have a wash. After this purification, the family gives a dinner to the caste people. One of the men examined by me explained that the man's life was more valuable than that of the woman, and that the husband, being a more important factor in the birth than the wife, deserves to be better looked after." The following legend is current among the Koramas, to explain the practice of the couvade among them. One day a donkey, belonging to a Korama camp, pitched outside a village, wandered into a Brāhman's field, and did considerable damage to the crop. The Brāhman was naturally angry, and ordered his coolies to pull down the hut of the owner of the donkey. The Korama, casting himself at the feet of the Brāhman, for want of a better excuse, said that he was not aware of what his animal was doing, as at the time he was taking medicine for his wife, and could not look after it. According to another version of the story, the Brāhman ordered his servants to remove the hut from his land or beat the Korava, so that Koravas have since that time taken to bed and shared the pollution of their wives, to escape being beaten.

In connection with the couvade, Mr. Fawcett writes that "it has been observed in the bird-catching Koravars, and the custom has been admitted by others. Directly a woman is brought to bed, she is given asafœtida rolled in betel leaf. She is then given a stimulant composed of asafœtida and other drugs. The husband partakes of a portion of this before it is given to the woman. This custom is one of those which the Koravar is generally at pains to conceal, denying its existence absolutely. The proverb 'When

the Koravar woman is confined, the Koravar man takes asafœtida' is, however, well known. Very soon after a woman is confined, attention is paid exclusively to her husband, who wraps himself in his wife's cloth, and lies down in his wife's place beside the new-born infant. He stays there for at least some minutes, and then makes room for his wife. The writer of this note was informed by Koravars that any one who refused to go through this ceremony would undergo the severest penalties, indeed, he would be turned out of the community. Nothing annoys a Koravar so much as to mention the word asafœtida in his presence, for he takes it to be an insulting reference to the couvade. The worst insult to a Koravar woman lies in the words 'Will you give asafœtida'? which are understood by her to mean an improper overture."

Some Koravas are said to believe that the pangs of labour are largely allayed by drinking small doses of a mixture of the dung of a male donkey and water. A few years ago, when a camp of Koravas was visited in the Salem district by the Superintendent of Police, two men of the gang, who had petitioned for the removal of the constables who were escorting the gang, dragged a woman in the throes of childbirth by the armpits from the hut. This was done to show that they could not move their camp, with a woman in such a condition. Nevertheless, long before daylight on the following day, the camp had been moved, and they were found at a spot fifteen miles distant. When they were asked about the woman, a hut slightly apart from the rest was pointed out, in front of which she was suckling the newly-born infant. She had done the journey immediately after delivery partly on foot, and partly on a donkey.

The Korava child's technical education commences early. From infancy, the Koravas teach their children to answer " I do not know " to questions put to them. They are taught the different methods of stealing, and the easiest way of getting into various kinds of houses. One must be entered through the roof, another by a hole in the wall, a third by making a hole near the bolt of the door. Before letting himself down from a roof, the Korava must make sure that he does not alight on brass vessels or crockery. He generally sprinkles fine sand in small quantities, so that the noise made thereby may give him an idea of the situation. The methods to be adopted during the day, when hawking wares, must be learnt. When a child is caught red-handed, he will never reveal his identity by giving the name of his parents, or of the gang to which he belongs. A girl about twelve or thirteen years old was captured a few years ago in the Mysore State at the Oregam weekly market, and, on being searched, was found to have a small knife in her cheek. She declared that she was an orphan with neither friends nor relations, but was identified by the police. The Koravas are adepts at assuming *aliases*. But the system of finger-print records, which has been introduced in recent years, renders the concealment of their identity more difficult than it used to be. " Both men and women," Mr. Paupa Rao writes, " have tattoo marks on their foreheads and forearms. When they are once convicted, they enlarge or alter in some way the tattoo marks on their forearms, so that they might differ from the previous descriptive marks of identification entered by the police in their search books and other records. During festivals, they put red stuff (kunkuma) over the tattoo marks on their foreheads."

Their conduct is regulated by certain well-defined rules. They should not enter a house by the front door, unless this is unavoidable, and, if they must so enter it, they must not leave by the same way. If they enter by the back door, they depart by the front door, which they leave wide open. They should not commit robbery in a house, in which they have partaken of rice and curds. Curds always require salt, and eating salt is equivalent to taking the oath of fealty according to their code of honour. They ease themselves in the house in which they have committed a theft, in order, it is said, to render the pursuit of them unsuccessful.

In a note on the initiation of Yerukala girls into the profession of fortune-telling in Vizagapatam, Mr. Hayavadana Rao writes that it is carried out on a Sunday succeeding the first puberty ceremony. A caste feast, with plenty of strong drink, is held, but the girl herself fasts. The feast over, she is taken to a spot at a little distance from the settlement called Yerukonda. This is said to be the name of a place on the trunk road between Vizianagram and Chicacole, to which girls were taken in former times to be initiated. The girl is blindfolded with a cloth. Boiled rice and green gram are mixed with the blood of a black fowl, black pig, and black goat, which are killed. Of this mixture she must take at least three morsels, and, if she does not vomit, it is taken as a sign that she will become a good Yeruka or fortune-teller. Vomiting would indicate that she would be a false prophetess.

When a wandering Korava dies, he is buried as quickly as possible, with head to the north, and feet to the south. If possible, a new cloth is obtained to wrap the corpse in. The grave is covered with the last hut which the deceased occupied. The Koravas immediately

leave a camp, in which a death has occurred. The nomad Koravas are said by Dr. Pope to bury their dead at night, no one knows where. Thence originates the common saying in regard to anything which has vanished, leaving no trace behind, that it has gone to the dancing-room of the wandering actors. Another proverb runs to the effect that no one has seen a dead monkey, or the burning-ground of a Korava.

In Vizagapatam, the Yerukala dead are stated by Mr. Hayavadana Rao to be burnt in a state of nudity. A tulsi plant (*Ocimum sanctum*) is usually planted on the spot where the corpse was burnt. The relations cannot follow their regular occupation until a caste feast has been held, and some cooked food thrown on the spot where cremation took place.

In a note on the death rites of the Koravas of the southern districts, Mr. F. A. Hamilton writes that, when one of the community dies, the news of the death is conveyed by a Paraiyan or Chakkiliyan. At the burning-ground, whither the corpse is accompanied with music, it is laid on dried cow-dung, which has been spread on the ground. The son of the deceased goes thrice round the corpse, and breaks a new water-pot which he has brought with him near the head. He also hands over a piece of burning sandalwood for lighting the pyre, and goes straight home without seeing the corpse again. On the third day, the son and other relations go to the burning-ground, heap up the ashes, plant either tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*), pērandai (*Vitis quadrangularis*), or kathalai (*Agave Americana*), and pour milk. On the sixteenth day, or at some later time, a ceremony called karumathi is performed. The relatives assemble at the burning-ground, and a stone is set up, and washed with water, honey, milk, etc. On the following

day, all the relatives take an oil-bath, and new cloths are presented to the host. Sheep are killed, and a feast, with a liberal supply of liquor, is held. Till this ceremony is performed, the son remains in mourning.

Concerning death ceremonies, Mr. Fawcett writes as follows. "A Tamil proverb likens the death of a Koravar to that of a monkey, for no one ever sees the dead body of either. Just as the monkey is thought to be immortal, the other monkeys removing the carcass instantly, so the corpse of the Koravar is made away with and disposed of with all possible speed. There is very little wailing, and preparations are made at once. If the deceased was married, the bier on which he is carried is practically a ladder ; if unmarried, it is a single bamboo with pieces of stick placed transversely. The winding-sheet is always a piece of new cloth, in one corner of which is tied a half anna-piece (which is afterwards taken by one of the corpse-bearers). Only two of these are under pollution, which lasts the whole of the day, during which they must remain in their huts. Next day, after bathing, they give the crows food and milk. A line is drawn on the body from head to foot with milk, the thick end of a piece of grass being used as a brush ; then they bathe. Pollution of the chief mourner lasts for five days. Half-yearly and annual ceremonies to the deceased are compulsory. A figure of the deceased is drawn with charcoal on a piece of new cloth spread on the floor of the hut. On either side of the figure is placed cooked rice and vegetables served on castor leaves. After some time, the food is placed on a new winnow, which is hung suspended from the roof of the hut the whole night. Next morning, the relations assemble, and partake of the food."

From a note on the Yerukalas of the Nellore district, I gather that, as a rule, the dead are buried, though respected elders of the community are cremated. Married individuals are carried to the grave on a bier, those who die unmarried wrapped in a mat. On the second day, some cooked food, and a fowl, are placed near the grave, to be eaten by crows. A pot of water is carried thrice round the grave, and then thrown down. On the ninth day, food is once more offered for the crows. The final death ceremonies are generally performed after two or three months. Cooked food, onions, brinjals (fruits of *Solanum Melongena*), *Phaseolus* pulse, squash gourd (*Cucurbita maxima*), pork, and mutton are placed on a number of castor (*Ricinus*) leaves spread on the floor, and offered to the soul of the deceased, which is represented by a human figure drawn on a new cloth. At the conclusion of the worship, the food is placed on new winnowing trays provided for the purpose, and given to the relations, who place the winnows on the roof of the house till the following day, when the food is eaten.

By some Koravas, a ceremony in honour of the departed ancestors is performed at the time of the November new moon. A well-polished brass vessel, with red and white marks on it, is placed in the corner of a room, which has previously been swept, and purified with cow-dung. In front of the pot is placed a leaf plate, on which cooked rice and other edibles are set. Incense is burned, and the eldest son of the house partakes of the food in the hope that he, in due course, will be honoured by his offspring.

The Koramas of Mysore are said to experience considerable difficulty in finding men to undertake the work of carrying the corpse to the grave. Should the dead Korama be a man who has left a young widow, it is

customary for some one to propose to marry her the same day, and, by so doing, to engage to carry out the principal part of the work connected with the burial. A shallow grave, barely two feet deep, is dug, and the corpse laid therein. When the soil has been loosely piled in, a pot of fire, carried by the chief mourner in a split bamboo, is broken, and a pot of water placed on the raised mound. Should the spot be visited during the night by a pack of jackals, and the water drunk by them to slake their thirst after feasting on the dead Korama, the omen is accepted as proof that the liberated spirit has fled away to the realms of the dead, and will never trouble man, woman, child, or cattle. On the sixth day, the chief mourner must kill a fowl, and mix its blood with rice. This he places, with some betel leaves and nuts, near the grave. If it is carried off by crows, everything is considered to have been settled satisfactorily.

As regards the dress of the Koravas, Mr. Mullaly writes as follows. "The women wear necklaces of shells and cowries interspersed with beads of all colours in several rows, hanging low down on the bosom; brass bangles from the wrist to the elbow; brass, lead, and silver rings, very roughly made, on all their fingers except the middle one. The cloth peculiar to Koravar women is a coarse black one; but they are, as a rule, not particular as to this, and wear stolen cloths after removing the borders and all marks of identification. They also wear the chola, which is fastened across the bosom, and not, like the Lambādis, at the back. The men are dirty, unkempt-looking objects, wear their hair long, and usually tied in a knot on the top of the head, and indulge in little finery. A joochi (gochi), or cloth round the loins, and a bag called vadi sanchi, made of striped cloth, complete their toilet."

"In 1884, Mr. Stevenson, who was then the District Superintendent of Police, North Arcot, devised a scheme for the regeneration of the Koravas of that district. He obtained for the tribe a tract of Government land near Gudiyattam, free of assessment for ten years, and also a grant of Rs. 200 for sinking wells. Licenses were also issued to the settlers to cut firewood at specially favourable rates. He also prevailed upon the Zemindar of Karvetnegar to grant twenty-five cawnies of land in Tiruttani for ten years for another settlement, as well as some building materials. Unfortunately the impecunious condition of the Zemindar precluded the Tiruttani settlement from deriving any further privileges which were necessary to keep the colony going, and its existence was, therefore, cut short. The Gudiyattam colony, on the other hand, exhibited some vitality for two or three years, but, in 1887, it, too, went the way of the Tiruttani colony."* I gather, from the Police Administration Report, 1906, that a scheme is being worked out, the object of which is to give a well-known wandering criminal gang some cultivable land, and so enable the members of it to settle down to an honest livelihood.

At the census, 1891, Korava was returned as a sub-division of Paraiyans, and the name is also applied to Jōgis employed as scavengers.†

The following note on the Koravas of the west coast is interesting as showing that Malabar is one of the homes of the now popular game of Diavolo, which has become epidemic in some European countries. "In Malabar, there is a class of people called Koravas, who

* Madras Mail, 1907.

† For this account of the Koravas, I am largely indebted to a report by Mr. N. E. Q. Mainwaring, Superintendent of Police.

have, from time immemorial, played this game almost in the same manner as its Western devotees do at the present time. These people are met with mostly in the southern parts of Malabar, Cochin and Travancore, and they speak the Malayālam language with a sing-song accent, which easily distinguishes them from other people. They are of wandering habits. The men are clever acrobats and rope-dancers, but those of more settled habits are engaged in agriculture and other industries. The beautiful grass mats, known as Palghat mats, are woven by these people. Their women are fortune-tellers and ballad singers. Their services are also in demand for boring the ears of girls. The rope-dancers perform many wonderful feats while balancing themselves on the rope, among them being the playing of diabolo while walking to and fro on a tight rope. The Korava acrobat spins the wooden spool on a string attached to the ends of two bamboo sticks, and throws it up to the height of a cocoanut tree, and, when it comes down, he receives it on the string, to be again thrown up. There are experts among them who can receive the spool on the string without even looking at it. There is no noteworthy difference in the structure and shape of the spool used by the Koravas, and those of Europe, except that the Malabar apparatus is a solid wooden thing a little larger and heavier than the Western toy. It has not yet emerged from the crude stage of the village carpenter's skill, and cannot boast of rubber tyres and other embellishments which adorn the imported article ; but it is heavy enough to cause a nasty injury should it hit the performer while falling. The Koravas are a very primitive people, but as acrobats and ropedancers they have continued their profession for generations past, and there is no doubt that they have

been expert diabolo players for many years."* It may be noted that Lieutenant Cameron, when journeying from Zanzibar to Benguela, was detained near Lake Tanganyika by a native chief. He relates as follows. "Sometimes a slave of Djonmah would amuse us by his dexterity. With two sticks about a foot long connected by a string of a certain length, he spun a piece of wood cut in the shape of an hour-glass, throwing it before and behind him, pitching it up into the air like a cricket-ball, and catching it again, while it continued to spin."

* Madras Mail, 1908.

Madras: Printed by The Superintendent, Government Press.